HISTORY OF INDIA

FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE MUGHAL CONQUEST

FOR

INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS OF THE PUNJAB UNIVERSITY

ISHWARI PRASAD

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HISTORY OF INDIA

(From the Earliest Period to the Mughal Conquest)

FOR

The Intermediate Students of the Punjab University

BY

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University of Allahabad

ALLAHABAD
THE INDIAN PRESS, LTD.

Price Rs. 5/-

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY K. MITTRA,
AT THE INDIAN PRESS, LTD., ALLAHABAD

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

This book was originally written for students preparing for the Intermediate Examination of the Punjab University. It was found useful by the teachers and taught alike. It has been thoroughly revised in the light of the contentions and suggestions that have been offered by competent teachers engaged in the teaching of history in the Punjab. I hope the present edition which is fairly exhaustive will commend itself to students as well as teachers in Intermediate Colleges.

June 15, 1938.

ISHWARI PRASAD

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PART I

ANCIENT INDIA

HISTORY OF INDIA

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

It has often been said in a rather damaging way that India has no history. If by this remark it is meant that in India there never took place any incident or cultural movement worth recording, then the remark is obviously wrong. If, on the other hand, it is taken to mean that the people of ancient India never took care to record what took place in the country from time to time, the remark is justified to a limited extent. There are native histories, for example, in the Purāṇas and such historical works as the *Rājataranginī*, or the chronicle of the kings of Kashmir composed in the twelfth century A.D. But they are very limited in their range, and sometimes betray an utter lack of historical sense. The historical portions of the Purāṇas have suffered so much from the carelessness of the copyists that uptill recently they were utterly neglected by scholars. That errors were allowed to creep in in such huge numbers itself shows how careless the Hindus have been about the preservation of historical tradition.

The patient researches of Europeans, who were later on joined by Indians, have resulted in building up the framework of ancient Indian history. But it is only a framework, an indistinct contour, where the details yet remain to be filled in.

The original authorities which are the sources of our knowledge of ancient Indian history fall under three broad heads: (1) Indian literature, (2) Foreign accounts and (3) Archaeological discoveries.

Sources of information.

Traditions about ancient genealogies are recorded in the *Mahābhārata* and the Purāṇas. It is not always easy to find true history out of them, as in their present form they present a mass of contradictions, unconnected facts and even absurdities. But thorough investigation into them has not yet been undertaken. In Buddhistic literature there are many incidental passages which are of great help in the reconstruction of history.

1. Indian Literature.

Besides recorded tradition, there are also a few historical works in Sanskrit, such as the *Harshacharita* of Bāṇa (seventh century), the *Vikramānka-charita* of Bilhaṇa and the *Rāmacharita* of Sandhyakara-nandin (twelfth century), of which mention will be made at their proper places. The most important work of this class is the *Rājataranginī* of Kalhaṇa (twelfth century) which gives the history of Kashmir till the time of the author. However much may these works lack in the qualities of a modern historical work, they are useful in that they give a lot of information about the periods they deal with.

For the reconstruction of the social history, Indian literature is the most important source. The Vedas yield the materials for our knowledge of the Aryans up to *circa* B.C. 800. For the next five or six centuries, the law-texts known Dharmasūtra and Dharmaśāstra have to be relied upon.

The earliest accounts of India left by foreigners came from the Greeks and Romans, one of the earliest of whom was Megasthenes, the Greek envoy in the court of Chandragupta Maurya (*circa* B.C. 300). Subsequent classical writers have mainly based their accounts on Megasthenes, supplemented by hearsay. Of them the more important are Strabo, Pliny and Arrian.

2. Foreign accounts.

Chinese travellers visited India in large numbers from the fifth century A.D., the important of them being FaHien, Hiuen Tsang and ITsing, who have left excellent accounts of Buddhism as it existed in their times. On other topics, none of them except Hiuen Tsang has much to say. Hiuen Tsang supplies a large portion of what we know about Harsha and his times.

The Muhammadan historians who record the exploits of Mahmud of Ghazni and Muhammad of Ghor are invaluable for their accounts of the political condition of India in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The third class of the original sources of information are the archaeological discoveries of monuments, coins and inscriptions. The coins reveal to us the names of many kings who would have remained unknown but for these. They are particularly valuable for the period between B.C. 200 and A.D. 300.

3. Archaeological discoveries.

The most important source of information, however, consists of hundreds of inscriptions found scattered all over India. The earliest epigraphic records of importance are those of Asoka in the third century B.C. From this time the practice of engraving

inscriptions of rocks, pillars, stone-slabs, pedestals of images and copper-plates came into vogue, and in later times the practice tremendously increased. They undoubtedly supply the basis of the major part of our knowledge of political history.

General features of Indian history.

No country can develop on lines contrary to what its natural conditions permit and India is no exception to the rule. It has been said that history is the product of two great forces, environment and personality; the course of action that the famous figures of history can take must of necessity take into account the natural surroundings in which they are placed.

Geologically the peninsula of the Deccan is older than the Himalayas and much more so than the Indo-Gangetic plains, which are the product of the alluvium deposited by the rivers descended from the Himalayas. But this does not mean that the history of the south goes back to an earlier age. When civilized man came into existence, the whole of India was well-formed. The discovery of the pre-historic civilization of the Indus valley again makes us turn to the North for the beginnings of Indian history.

The vastness of the Indian plains does not favour the 'city-state' form of government as in ancient Greece and India has always been predominantly a land of country-states, with the village as the primary unit. Powerful kings have aspired for, and not infrequently attained, an empire 'from sea to sea.' But in such a vast country and in an age with no means of rapid communication, rigid centralization was impossible. Whenever the king at the centre has been weak, the feudatories and even governors have declared their

independence. From the centre to the circumference this has been the normal political history of India.

Though in early times we come across the existence of some autonomous political clans, monarchy has been the normal form of government in India. Representative system not being very common, an assembly of the whole country was out of the question. But local assemblies were a very important part of the body politic and the authoritativeness of local customs was admitted by law-givers, who have exhorted kings to respect and even enforce them. Local allegiance and local interest mostly dominated the activities of the people. Accustomed to political subjection, they did not much care about the power that held the reins of government. A change in the ruling dynasty did not much affect them; it seldom meant anything more than 'a change of masters.' Considering the long history of India, popular revolts, as distinct from the revolts of self-seekers, have been remarkably few.

From early times people developed the conception of the whole of India (Bharatavarsha) as one unit. The holy places of the Brahmanas are spread all over India; the rivers which are of special sanctity include the Saraswati in the north-west, the Ganges at the centre and the Narmada and the Godavari in the south. These facts indicate that as a cultural concept the fundamental unity of India was recognised. But politically a popular national feeling was almost absent. A catastrophe of a neighbouring province did not rouse much sympathy in the people of another province, and there was little tendency to unite even in the face of a common danger.

CHAPTER II

PRE-HISTORIC INDIA

A. Races of India

The science of physical anthropology teaches us that different races of man have certain physical characteristics which persist through ages and can only be modified by a mixture with another race with different anatomical peculiarities. Some such test-characteristics have been found out, of which the most important are the formations of the head and nose. Heads and noses have been classified as long, medium and broad in accordance with the proportion of their breadth to the length.

Anthropometry in India.

Generally speaking, the people of the Maratha country and Bengal have broad heads, the lower castes of the United Provinces and Bihar have a tendency towards broad noses, which are also characteristic of Bengal, and the people of the Punjab are more or less uniform in physical appearance, being long-headed and long-nosed. The eastern frontiers of India have distinct Mongolian traits.

These facts have enabled scholars to find out the various races that inhabited India in ancient times. The results are far from certain and only source of the principal races may be noted here.

1. The Pre-Dravidians.

The Pre-Dravidians, who might have been a composite race, with broad noses and little civilization. Probably the lowest castes of the Gangetic plains are descended from them; they are also to be found in the jungle tracts of the south.

2. The Kols.

The Kols or Mundās, whose descendants now inhabit the Chota Nagpur region and are known as Kols, Sonthals, etc. Traces of the Kol language are now found scattered all over India from the Punjab to Madras. It is instructive to know that their language is connected with those of Polynesia, Melanesia and Madagascar. This may probably show that the whole of this region was once inhabited by one vast race which branched off later on.

3. The Dravidians.

The Dravidians, who were certainly the most important of the Pre-Aryan races of India. Whence they came to India has often been discussed. It is held by some that they came from the southern seas by the sea route; but the better opinion is that, like most of the immigrants and invaders, they entered India by the north-western passes.

The term 'Dravidian' is sometimes loosely used to denote all the aboriginal population of India; strictly speaking, it ought to be restricted to only one of such peoples. They were distinguished from the others by the much higher degree of civilization that they had attained. They lived in villages and fortified towns and had knowledge of some metals. They had a developed language and probably knew the art of writing. Their society was divided into groups, each

with a 'totem';[1] cousin-marriage, which we still find in the south, was prevalent among them. They observed the laws of matriarchy or mother-right, by which man inherits the property, and belongs to the social group of his mother's brother and not of his father. They seem to have worshipped the mother-goddess and other deities, including trees and animals.

At the present time the Dravidian population of India (in fact of the world) is mostly confined to the south, but there are strong reasons to believe that it was at one time spread all over Northern India, where it has left ineffaceable traces of its language and institutions. The northern vernaculars of India, though mainly Aryan, have below them a solid Dravidian substratum.

Besides the above, we have to recognize a further element in the Indian population to explain the broad heads of the people of the western coast and Bengal. It is now held that the element responsible for this was an extension of the Alpine people, who came from outside and spread from the Maratha country to Bengal through the forest regions of Central India. The Alpine stock is a group of peoples inhabiting the plateaus of the Himalayas, Asia Minor, the Balkans and the Central mountains of Europe, all characterized by their broad heads.

4. The Alpine Stock.

Next came the Aryans, probably a white, long-headed and fine-nosed people, who entered India by

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[1] Totemism is an institution, still obtaining among all primitive peoples, in which a group of people think that they are in some way or other intimately connected with an object of nature, mostly a particular animal, but sometimes other things as well.

the north-western passes and settled in the Punjab, clearing it of all the Dravidian settlers. Thence they spread eastwards and southwards, mixing more and more with the native population, and thus getting their physical peculiarities modified. The mixture also produced the hybrid civilization of India in which Aryan and Dravidian elements are equally prominent.

5. The Aryans.

B. Pre-Historic Finds

Man has been called a 'tool-using animal' and no doubt all progress of culture is due to the increased use of tools and implements in the conquest of nature to make life happier and more comfortable. The material history of man is an account of the progress from a 'toolless' state to the present state of complicated machinery.

The Four Ages.

Antiquarians therefore divide their account of pre-historic man according to the material used in making tools and utensils. According to them, man has passed through four stages: (1) the Palaeolithic or Old Stone Age, (2) the Neolithic or New Stone Age, (3) the Copper Age and (4) the Iron Age.

In the Palaeolithic Age, the implements, made of very roughly hewn stone, were hurled against the game. Such pieces of stone have been found in some places of Central India and more specially in the south.

The Palaeolithic Age.

After the lapse of thousands of years, man reached the Neolithic Age. The use of metals was yet unknown, but stone was ground against some hard material and made into weapons and utensils, sharply pointed

The Neolithic Age.

and decently executed. Such implements have been found in large numbers in Bengal, Chota Nagpur, Gujarat, the Deccan, the south and other stray places. They are of diverse types and include polishing stones, ring stones, cells, flakes, cores, discs, grooved hammers and even corn-grinders.

Gradually man came to learn the use of metals. At first the splendour of gold might have attracted him, but it was given up in favour of harder metals, such as copper. Copper articles are found practically all over Northern India, more particularly in the United Provinces, and include a variety of things, such as axes, sabres, harpoons, chiselling weapons, ornaments, etc.

The Copper Age.

The next stage in the evolution of human history was the Iron Age, when man learned the use of iron. We do not know if the aboriginal tribes of India knew it; it is possible that it was first introduced in India by the Aryans. In the south, there is no evidence of the use of iron before B.C. 600 or 700.

The Iron Age.

C. The Indus Civilization

A unique interest has been attached to the problem of the original inhabitants of India by the recent archaeological discoveries at Mohenjo-daro in Sind. The importance of the site was first recognized in 1922, and since then systematic excavations carried on there have laid bare a civilization the existence of which was unknown before. The site contains the ruins of an ancient city, of which seven strata, one built upon the other, have been found, and there is no doubt that some more are lying

Mohenjo-daro.

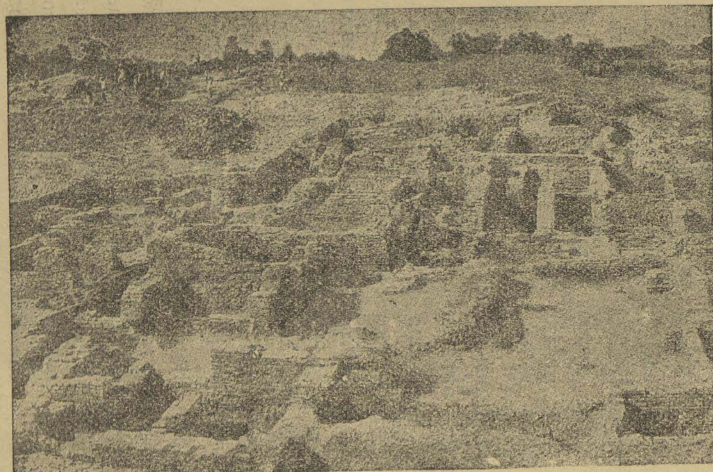
untouched below the sub-soil water. The date of the upper strata may be fixed at B.C. 2700 but the people who planned out this elaborate city and evolved the high degree of culture represented therein, must have had centuries of experience behind them, so that India can now justly claim, along with Egypt and Babylonia, to be one of the earliest houses of civilization.

Building, etc.

The excavations, as has been said above, have brought to light a city with its residential houses, public halls, a well-designed and sanitary system of drainage and broad roads and bye-lanes. The houses of the rich were big, with many architectural devices to beautify them, and probably consisting of several storeys. The people were thoroughly acquainted with the art of burning bricks, a no mean achievement when we remember that the neighbouring people of the same age used only sun-baked bricks. The drainage and conservancy arrangements of the city were excellent and full care was taken to ensure good sanitation. There were some other buildings other than residential ones, which might have been used for religious purposes.

The Great Bath.

A remarkable structure of the city is what has been called the Great Bath, which is one of the best preserved buildings. The water was probably supplied from one of the neighbouring tanks and there was an outlet for the discharge of stagnant water. The walls of the bath were covered with a layer of bitumen, one inch thick, which protected the bricks from damp. Near the bath was a series of small bath-rooms and in some of them there were arrangements for hot-water bath. All these testify to the high degree of civilization of the residents.



Mohenjo-dare

The metals known to the people were gold, silver, copper, tin, lead and the alloy named bronze, but not iron. Gold and silver were used as ornaments, but copper was made into weapons and utensils as well. Stone being difficult to procure in the plains of Sind, it was sparingly used. Cotton and wool were spun and woven into clothes, though we have not much evidence to infer what was the dress of the people. Ornaments of various descriptions were worn both by men and women, and besides metals, were made of precious stones, beads, ivory, shell and bones. The dead were burnt and the ashes buried, though there are some examples of the body being buried. The household utensils were very much the same as are to be found today in an Indian house.

Seals.

Among the most interesting pieces of antiquity are about 550 seals.[2] made of paste, stone or steatite of various colours. To what use they were put it is difficult to say, but they are of unique value to antiquarians. On most of them is engraved the figure of some animal or other—bull, unicorn, elephant, antelope or the like! Above (and sometimes beside and below) these animals we find writings, which unfortunately have not yet been read, as they have no similarity with the script that was used in India in later days. Though some scholars have tried to find



Mohenjo-daro Seal.

2 On some of the seals we find the figure of humpless bulls, a type which has now disappeared from India.

points of resemblance between the scripts of Mohenjo-daro and those of some places in Western Asia, nothing substantial has been done in the direction of a correct decipherment, and we do not yet know the language that was spoken and used in writing by the Mohenjo-daro people.

Religion

One of the main objects of worship of the people was the mother-goddess, as is found among many ancient peoples of the Near East, *e.g.*, Asia Minor, Egypt, Phoenicia, etc. A seal reproduced here, is of extreme interest, as it shows the male god that was worshipped. On it we find a figure with a trident or horns on the head, surrounded by wild animals, and sitting in an erect meditative posture; it at once reminds one of the later Hindu conception of the god Śiva-paśupati (Śiva, the lord of animals), who was the chief of the meditators (*yogendra*). Other objects of worship were the *phallus* (*linga*, still prevalent all over India), trees and some animals. Though there were certain points of resemblance between the religions of the Indus people and the Sumerians of Babylonia (modern Iraq) the two must be regarded as distinct.

Foreign affinities.

This Mohenjo-daro civilization has been called the 'Indus civilization,' as the river system of the Indus played a great part in its evolution, though the civilization was by no means confined to the Indus area. It has an important place in world-history, as it forms a part of the great Chalcolithic civilization which extended from Egypt to India, and which belonged to an age when the use of metals (but not iron) was fully known, but stone was not yet altogether abandoned. It throve on the great

river systems of the East, the Nile, the Euphrates and Tigris and the Indus, and was essentially an urban civilization.

The points of contact between the Indus people and other peoples of the age, particularly the Sumerians, are sometimes evident, but we are not sure of the racial affinities of the Indus people. Some of the skulls found at Mohenjo-daro have the same characteristics as those of the present population of the Punjab; but that does not prove anything. That the people were different from the Aryans is absolutely certain, as there is not a shadow of resemblance between the Indus and Vedic cultures. Whether the Dravidians were its authors or were at any rate connected with them, is more than what can be definitely said in the present state of our knowledge.

Destruction.

How the Indus civilization met with its destruction can only be a piece of historical speculation. It might be conjectured that a flood of the Indus or its gradual drifting away from the city might have rendered the place infertile. The rainfall of Sind, which must have been much more copious than it is now, might have decreased about the second millennium before Christ, and Sind might have shown signs of turning into a desert that it is now. Or else, the conquering Aryans, or some other tribe from outside India, might have fallen upon the people and destroyed the civilization.

Other pre-historic sites.

It has been said above that the Indus people were in some ways connected with othr outside peoples, notably the Sumerians. For example, some seals of exactly the Mohenjo-daro type, have been found in Irāq.

Explorations in interior Baluchistan have revealed some relics which show that there was a regular chain of settlements connecting the Indus area with Mesopotamia. Communication, it seems, was more by land than by sea, as there are no relics near the sea-coast.

But it must not be thought for a moment that the Indus civilization was foreign to the Indian soil, or that it was confined to only one or two places in the west At Harappa in the Montgomery district of the Punjab, the Indus people had a city which was bigger than that at Mohenjo-daro but unfortunately it is much less preserved. The whole of Sind has been found to be studded with pre-historic sites. At Amri (Karachi district) relics of a still older culture have been found. Traces of the Indus civilization have now been found as far east a Ambala. And it is expected that similar traces will be found in the heart of the Indo-Gangetic plains.

Non-Aryan survivals.

It is interesting to know to what extent pre-Aryan culture-traits[3] are still living among us. It may at once be unhesitatingly stated that they are many and profound. Time was when both Indians and Europeans, in their pride of supposed Aryan blood, tried to belittle the non-Aryan culture and to find an Aryan origin for everything good. But it is now time that we revised our judgment.

To take the case of the lower strata of the society we find among them the prevalence of the worship of trees, fetishes and demons such as Rāhu, which are all

3 The village-folk of Northern India count by twenties, instead of by tens, which is a Kol characteristic.

non-Aryan. Among them we also find traces of matriarchy, which again is a non-Aryan institution.

The upper fold of society has been equally affected. We have already spoken of the Dravidian influence on Indian vernaculars. In religion also there are prominent survivals of non-Aryanism. In the Vedas we find no evidence of the worship of the mother-goddess or the *phallus*, which have a prominent place in modern Hinduism; no doubt they were borrowed from the Mohenjo-daro people. Similar is the case of Śiva-Paśupati, who now occupies a supreme position in the Hindu pantheon.

In philosophy also, some notions must be traced to non-Aryan sources. The theory and practice of Yoga (meditation through some particular processes) which are entirely foreign to the sentiment of the Vedas, were known to the Mohenjo-daro people, and there is no harm in believing that the later Hindus learnt them from the non-Aryans. Some scholars think that Jainism and the Sāṅkhya system of Indian philosophy (see Chapter V) are greatly indebted to non-Aryan thought. Add to this the institution of image worship which did not obtain in the Vedic times but became an all-important feature in later Hinduism. Hinduism, as we know it now, is, therefore, not the exclusive gift of the Indo-Aryans; the non-Aryans also played an equally prominent part in its evolution.

CHAPTER III

THE VEDIC AGE

A. Antecedents of the Indo-Aryans

The Indo-Europeans.

In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, scholars noticed that there are some words which are common to Sanskrit and the European languages, and suspected a common origin for all. The subject was pursued further and further, till the hypothesis of a common origin was fully established, and the beginnings were laid of the new science of comparative philology. This science ended in proving the existence of a language or a group of languages, tentatively called Indo-European or Indo-Germanic. A small list of some common words in the languages derived from the original Indo-European may be given here:

Sanskrit.	*Avestan.*	*Greek.*	*Latin.*	*English.*
pitar	pitar	pater	pater	father
mātar	matar	mater	mater	mother
bhrātra	bhratar	phreter	frater	brother
Svasar	Khvanhar	eor	soror	sister
dvar	duar	thura	fores	door
gau	gaus	bous	bos	cow
sū-kara	hu	hus	sus	sow

The list may be prolonged, but is sufficient to show the similarity in the vocabulary of the Indo-European languages. The connection between Sanskrit (or Vedic, the original of Sanskrit) and the language of the Avesta (the sacred book of the old Persians) is more intimate, as they belong to the eastern group of these languages.

Though there is no evidence to show that the people now speaking the Indo-European languages were ethnically one before they dispersed in different directions, it may be surmised that they were connected with each other in some period of history and lived in a common land. To this undivided people also, the name Indo-European or Indo-Germanic may be given, a term which is entirely innocent of any ethnic significance. It has long been a matter of discussion what region the Indo-Europeans inhabited before their final separation. Central Asia, Central Europe, the Steppes of Russia, the Polar Region, each of these countries has been suggested, but no definite solution has been arrived at.

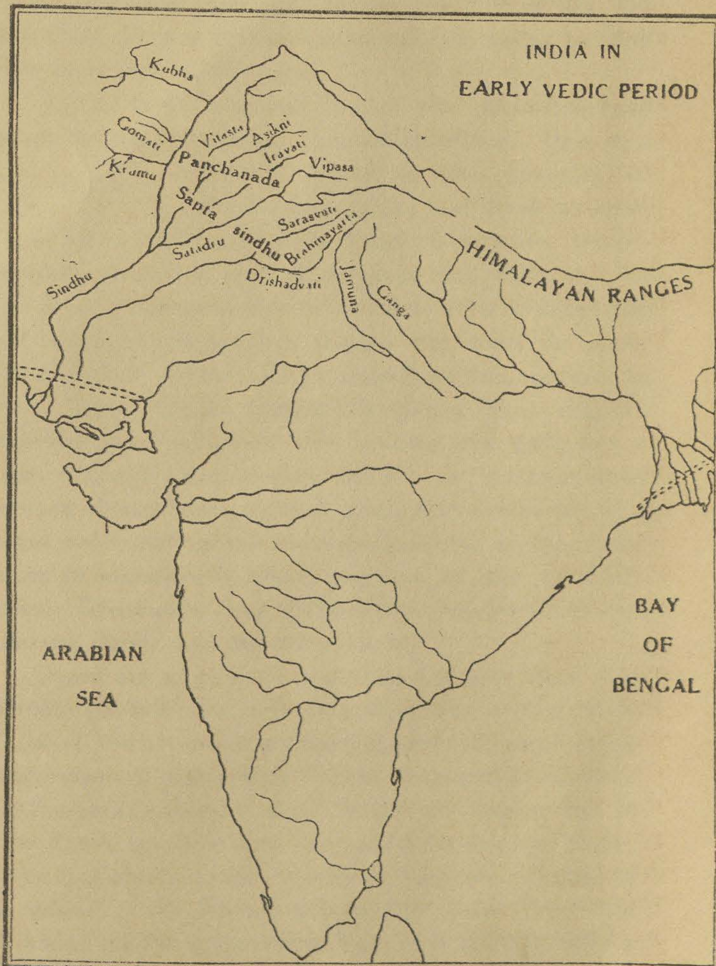
From the words that are common to all the Indo-European languages we can form some rough idea of the culture of these undivided people. They were acquainted with agriculture and produced barley for their food. But hunting too was an occupation and the flesh of the wild animals was freely taken. Wool was used as a protection against the severe cold. The cow, the dog, the sheep and the horse were domesticated, and cattle were regarded as wealth. The people lived in roofed houses with doors. Warfare was very frequent and there were some sorts of fort. The people worshipped the sky as father, as also the dead ancestors whom they

propitiated with food and drink. The cult of fire, an important feature of the Vedic religion, seems to have been unknown at this stage.

From their original home, the Indo-European people began to move in various directions. One such branch moved in the direction of Persia and India, and lived at some place for a sufficiently long time to acquire certain common characteristics in language and religion. To this branch the name Aryan (Sanskrit ārya or ārya, and Avestan airya) is applied, though the term is sometimes used to denote all the Indo-European people as well. This branch further developed the original Indo-European religion: they created new gods and a class of people, the priests, to act as intermediaries between themselves and their gods; they conceived of a moral order ruling the universe and evolved the institution of sacrifices in which the cult of fire predominates. Ultimately they divided into two branches, one entering Persia and the other India.

The Aryans.

There are some records outside India to show that in some parts of Western Asia there was some activity of the Aryans, though we are not sure of any Aryan colonization of these parts. Some inscriptions of about the fourteenth century B.C. found at Boghaz-koi in Asia Minor mention some Aryan deities such as Indra, Varuna, Mitra and the Nāsatyas (Aśvins). Some of the names of the Kassite princes who held Babylonia for about six centuries (circa B.C. 1800 to 1200) have a distinctly Aryan appearance. According to some scholars these facts show that these regions were visited by the Aryans in the course of their ramblings before they entered India. Others, however, hold that these Aryan


INDIA IN
EARLY VEDIC PERIOD
Kubha
Gomati
Vitasta
Asikni
Iravati
Vipasa
Panchanada
Sapta
sindhu
Sarasvati
Satadru
Sindhu
Drishadvati
Jamuna
Ganga
HIMALAYAN RANGES
ARABIAN
SEA
BAY
OF
BENGAL

influences were the result of contact, commercial or otherwise, with the Aryans of India.

The branch of the Aryans who entered India is known as the Indo-Aryans. Their advent on the Indian soil has been variously dated, from B.C. 5000 or even earlier to B.C. 1500. Any accurate dating is impossible but some date between B.C. 2500 and 2000 seems to satisfy all the conditions. It must not be thought that they entered India in one stream; the immigration must have been a prolonged process, distributed over a period of a few centuries.

B. The Vedic Literature

Our only source of information about the Aryans in India is the vast literature known as the Vedas. The Vedas are four in number covering a wide field, as regards their subject-matter as well as the period of their composition. Orthodox Hindu opinion does not regard any portion of the Vedas to be human composition; the whole literature, according to it, was revealed to a favoured few, the *rishis* or the 'seers,' who 'said' the hymns and handed them down to their descendants. Indeed so strong is the opinion about the sanctity of the Vedas that it is held that beyond them there is no correct philosophical knowledge and no sanction of the law. Every later law-giver and philosopher took care to see that their teachings did not contradict the Vedas, which were twisted so as to suit the views of different writers.

The Vedas.

To the student of philology and comparative religion the importance of the Vedas is unique. They are the first book of the Indo-European family and yield invaluable material for linguistic research and study of

the early religions and institutions. But the difficulties in correct interpretation are many; the language is obscure to such a degree that a knowledge of later Sanskrit does not help much; the orthodox Indian commentators were uncritical to the highest degree and prejudice sometimes forbade them to come to the true meaning. Patient researches of scholars who follow a comparative method of constantly referring to other cognate languages and literature, have done a great deal, but still much is left to be done.

Classification.

The parts which constitute the Vedas are:

(1) the *Samhitas* of the four Vedas,

(2) the *Brāhmanas* attached to each of the *Samhitas*,

(3) the *Āraṇyakas* and the *Upanishads*, mostly attached to the *Brāhmans*, but in reality forming separate and unconnected treatises.

The Samhitas.

The *Samhitas* (or 'collections') are also not homogeneous in character. The *Samhita of the Rig-veda*, a large portion of which is the oldest piece of Vedic literature, is a book of hymns or psalms, sung to the praise of the various gods. It contains 1,028 hymns divided into ten books (mandala), of which the first and tenth are decidedly later compositions. Some of the books are the exclusive composition of the various sages (*rishis*), who 'saw' (*i.e.*, composed) the hymns contained therein. The *Yajurveda-Samhita* consists of stanzas borrowed from the *Rigveda-Samhita*, as well as original prose formulas. It has come down to us in two distinct recensions, the *Śukla* or the Pure and the

Krishṇa or the Black (*i.e.*, mixed) in which the text and its commentary have been mixed up. The *Sāma-veda-Samhita* has no historical value, as almost all its hymns are taken from the *Rigveda-Samhita*, though they are arranged in a different order, and are meant for chanting. The *Atharvaveda-Samhita*, portions of which are as old as the Rigveda, deals with magic spells and witchcraft; for long, it was not given its place in the Vedic literature.

The Brāhmanas

The *Brāhmanas* seek to explain the hymns of the *Samhitas* in an orthodox and dogmatic way, and put each hymn in its proper place as required in the sacrifices. They invent myths, etymologies and strange statements to suit their purposes and fancies. The subject-matter is ritual and the language naturally is prose.

The *Araṇyakas*, and *Upanishads.*

The *Āraṇyakas* are the last books of the *Brāhmanas* dealing with philosophical doctrines and were considered too sacred to be read anywhere else but in the forest (*araṇya*). The *Upanishads* also deal with spiritual topics and are mostly appended to the *Āraṇyakas*. These two constitute the ' knowledge-branch ' (*jnāna-kāṇda*) of the Vedas, while the *Brāhmanas* are known as ' ritual-branch ' (*karma-kāṇda*).

Chronology.

The decision of the upper date-limit of the Vedic literature is inseparably connected with the coming of the Aryans to India. That event, as we said before, took place probably in the third millennium B.C. As regards the lower limit, it has been pointed out that Jainism and Buddhism were acquainted with all the branches of the Vedas which must have, therefore, existed in their

present form in the sixth century before Christ. It is highly probable that by the eighth century B.C. the Vedic literature was complete.

As the composition of the Vedas spread over a period of time exceeding a thousand years, it is but reasonable that the political and social conditions underwent considerable change during this period. Though it is impossible to set up precise date-limits, the Vedic Age is usually dealt with under two heads, the Early Vedic, in which the earlier portions of the *Rigveda-Samhita* are the source of our information, and the Later Vedic for which the other portions of the Vedic literature supply the material.

C. The Earl Vedic Age

The Indo-Aryans entered the Indian soil by the north-western passes and settled in the Punjab, the land watered by the seven rivers (*sapta-sindhavah*). The rivers mentioned in the *Rigveda-Samhita* include those of Afghanistan and the Punjab, and of them mention may be made of the Suvastu (Swat), Gomati (Gomal), Indus, Vitastā (Jhelum), Asikne (Chenab), Parushni (Ravi), Vipās (Beas) and Sutudri (Sutlaj). The Ganga and the Yamuna (Ganges and Jumna) though occasionally mentioned, did not occupy the position they did in the later times. The Sarasvati was originally the name of the Indus, but in later times, the name was transferred to the stream now known as the Sarsuti, which was previously a tributary of the Indus and now loses itself in the desert of Rajputana. This river was held in the greatest veneration and on its banks the majority of the Rigvedic hymns were composed.

Geography

The people.

The Aryans were no doubt a pastoral and agricultural people when they entered India. The cow was to them an object of the greatest value and in their prayers to gods they prayed for an increase in their cattle. The artisan's craft included carpentry, weaving, metal-working, chariot-making and tanning. Wheat and barley formed the staple food of the people, and meat was also taken. The clothes were made of wool and cotton, and the garment consisted of two or three pieces of clothing. Coloured garments and gold ornaments were highly prized by both sexes. Gambling and chariot-races formed the favourite pastimes of the people. They drank distilled liquor (*sura*) on ordinary occasions, in the sacrifices, however, the intoxicating juice of a plant called *soma* was freely drunk.

Family.

The normal unit of the people was the family to which the people were greatly attached. The father was the head of the family, and no doubt exercised some autocratic powers over the other members. But he regarded his wife as his equal partner in life and was helped by her in the management of household affairs. Monogamy was the usual rule, and there is no evidence to show that women held a subordinate place in society. Marriage took place between grown-up persons only; widow-remarriage does not seem to have been the rule. On the whole, the people appear to have lived a happy and easy life of plenty

Political Units.

The village (*grāma*) consisted of several families with agricultural lands attached to it. It was a definite political unit under headman (*grāmani*); but what was its relation to *vis*,

another unit is not clear, though it has been held by some that *vis* was a canton in the form of a collection of villages.

Tribes.

The people were divided into several tribes (*jana*) each under a king, of which five acquired great importance—the Purus, Turvasas, Yadus, Anus, and Druhyus, frequently referred to as the Five Peoples (*pancha-janah*). It is not easy to locate these tribes, though it seems probable that the Purus were settled on the banks of the Sarasvati, the Anus on the Ravi and the Druhyus further west, while the Turvasas and Yadus occupied the southern portion of the Punjab. On the frontier there were other tribes known as the Alinas, Pakthas, Bhalanases, etc.

Battle of the ten kings.

A very important tribe not mentioned above was the Bharatas, who were settled on both the banks of the Sarasvati (which probably refers here to the Indus and not the Sarsuti). Originally they seem to have been a branch of the Purus, but under their powerful king Sudās, they appear to have separated from the original stock. The Rigveda mentions a battle of ten kings (*dasarājna*) in which the kings of ten tribes allied themselves against Sudās, the Bharata king, but were defeated. The details are obscure, but it is clear that the rivalries were fanned by the personal enmities of the Sages Bhāradvāja and Vasishtha, which is explained by the fact that the family of the Bhāradvājas was formerly attached to the Bharata court, but was displaced thence by the Vasishtha family. The Vasishthas too did not long enjoy their position, as a new sage, Viśvāmitra, soon appeared on

the scene, and at a later stage, this sage seems to have led the Bh ratas further to the east, where they appear to have settled between the Sarasvati (Sarsuti) and the Jumna.

The Polity.

Hereditary kingship was the normal mode of government. The king lived in pomp and majesty, and his authority was binding on the people. He was expected to rule according to the customary law, and was helped in the administ·ation by the priest (*purohita*), often hereditarily attached to the court. The king who was bountiful to his priests was lauded in the hymns. One of the important functions of the kingly office was to lead the people in war, in which he was helped by a general (*senānī*), a high state official. As the protector of the people, the king might have exercised some judicial power over criminals, but the ordinary administration of justice seems to have rested on the family or the village. It appears that he had no proprietary right over the land, which was held individually by the people. There was no regular army, the mass forming the militia in times of necessity. Tribute was exacted from the conquered kings.

Popular assemblies.

There were two popular assemblies, the *Sabhā* and the *Samiti*, about the composition of which we are entirely in the dark. It has been suggested that the Sabhā was the village or clan assembly, while the Samiti was a bigger body consisting of the whole tribe. They might have had some administrative, legislative and judicial powers; but how they were exercised is anything but certain. It has been supposed by some that an important function of these bodies was to elect

the king. There is no evidence to support this conjecture; as has been said above, the office of the king passed from father to son, though every new king had to be formally accepted by the assembled people.

Wars

War was an important institution in the Rigvedic polity. The army was no doubt an irregular crowd composed of the populace, and fighting was done with spears, swords and axes The people fought frequently with one another and perhaps occasionally with the aboriginals. It has been said repeatedly that the Dāsas and the Dasyus with whom the gods are represented as fighting were the non-Aryan population of the Punjab. But in most cases the terms denote atmospheric demons and have no reference to terrestrial foes at all

The gods.

The Vedic literature is religious and non-secular in character, and so our knowledge about the religion of the people is more complete than any other branch of their life. The Aryans were worshippers of natural power, and wherever they perceived lively power, they created a deity. At their earliest stage the gods, therefore, represented the powers of nature; gradually, however, they came to be divorced from the objects which they had originally represented and ultimately came to be worshipped themselves. But their true nature was never forgotten, and it is mostly possible for us to detect the natural phenomenon which each god had behind him.

The gods numbered thirty-three, excluding the group-gods, such as the Marutas and the Ādityas, and were classified as celestial, atmospheric and terrestrial.

The main gods worshipped were Varuna, Indra, the Sun, Agni (Fire) and Soma (a plant the juice of which served as the sacred draught).

The nature of some of the deities may be briefly dealt with. According to some, Varuna was the god of the sky. He was regarded as being in charge of the right, truth and moral order (*ṛīta*). He was conceived as a king, and no sinner could escape his vigilant eyes. Indra, the most popular of the gods, has been given the largest number of hymns in the *Rigveda-Samhita.* More often than not, we find him fighting with the atmospheric demons (generally called Vritra), who were supposed to have stolen the rain water. Indra pursued them, smote them with his thunder-bolt and released the water, which now fell in streams on the lands of his worshippers. He had to perform his feat every year before the commencement of the rains. The Marutas (strong gales) helped Indra in scattering away the demons. Rudra, the god of thunder and storm, was regarded as a fierce, terribly bright and irascible personage who took offence at the slightest defect in his worship. Agni (Fire) was regarded as a priest and a messenger, inasmuch as he conveyed to the gods the oblations offered by the devotee. The sun-god, worshipped in his various forms, Savitri, Pushan, Vishnu, Mitra, Surya, etc., must have attracted the early attention of the Aryans. He dispels the dark demons who occupy the earth in the night and drives his victorious chariot through the sky in the daytime. The sun-god Vishnu does not occupy that supreme position which he holds in later mythology. Some of the attributes and symbols of the Sun have been attributed to him in later times. To Savitri, another sun-god, is

addressed the verse, found in the 62nd hymn, Book III, of the *Rigveda-Samhita* and given below, which is even now on the lips of every Brāhmana and is regarded as the sacred of the sacred:

> "We meditate on that glorious lustre of the god Savitri, so that he may give a right direction to our thoughts."

The Dyaus (sky) and Prithwi (the mother-earth) were together worshipped as father and mother. Ushas was the goddess of Dawn and to her are addressed some of the finest poetical pieces of the Rigveda. Besides these, every river was considered to be presided over by a goddess, known after the name of the river.

Myths grew about the origins and achievements of the gods, and they were often fondly conceived of in a human form; but they had no anthropomorphic representation in images. The idea of a supreme god above all these gods was only occasionally conceived; he was given various names as Purusha, Hiraṇya-garbha and Prajāpati.

Besides the worship of the gods by prayers, the Aryans propitiated them with offerings of ghee, milk and *soma* in sacrifices. The process was simple, consisting of the throwing of oblations into the sacrificial fire, accompanied with the recitation of hymns. But sacrifices were not an end in themselves; they were simply the means to please the gods; they were not endowed with any mystic significance and could not bestow any boon on the sacrificer by their own virtue. That quality was reserved for the gods alone.

Sacrifice.

D. The Later Vedic Age

The later Vedic Age is in every sense a development of the Rigvedic Age in all directions. The geographical horizon is much more extended and we come across references to Pānchāla (Northern Doab), Kosala (Oudh) and Videha (North Bihar) in the east and Vidarbha (Berar) in the south. These newly colonized lands were not at once given a recognized place in Aryandom. Even in later times we find orthodox opinion still regarding the eastern provinces with disfavour. A passage in the *Satapatha Brahmana*[1] contains an interesting story of the colonization of Kosala (Oudh) and Videha (North Bihar) by the Brahmanas and Kshatriyas. The tract south of the Vindhyas was still unknown, though some aboriginal tribes, the Sabaras, Pulindas and Andhras, probably inhabiting the Vindhyas, are once spoken of.

Tribes and Kingdoms.

At the same time the West Punjab gradually got out of the Aryan ken, and the centre of culture definitely shifted to the land between the Sarasvati and the Ganges, the kingdom of the Kurus and Panchalas.

The political changes were no less definite. The Purus and Bharatas, who were enemies at the time of the Battle of the Ten Kings, were now amalgamated under the new name Kuru and held the Sarasvati area. They were considered the most cultured of the Aryans; their speech formed the norm and their conduct was prescribed as the model. They were the best masters of rituals and could perform sacrifices without fault.

1 See Appendix.

They gave the name Kurukshetra to the land of their residence and helped in the spread of Aryan culture. Closely allied to them were the Panchalas who inhabited the northern portion of the Ganges-Jumna Doab and held an equally important position in popular estimation.

Cities.

For the first time we come across references to cities such as Asandivat, the unidentified capital of the Kurus, Kampilya, the capital of the Panchalas (modern Kampil in the Furrukhabad district, U.P.) and Kasi (Benares), the capital of a dynasty of that name.

The relation of the Aryans with the aboriginals in this age is as obscure as in the earlier age. No doubt, the conquest of new territories brought the Aryans in closer touch with the indigenous population. Intermarriages must have modified their physical appearance and language; this may explain the aversion of the purer western Aryans towards the natives of the east. We hear of a people called the Vratyas or outcasts, who seem to have been a nomadic tribe. A ceremony is prescribed for bringing them into the Aryan fold.

The King.

With the acquisition of new territories the kingdoms swelled in size and this produced a change in the position of the king. We come across references to such terms as Samrāj, Adhirāja, etc., which definitely denote imperial and feudal ideas. Monarchy was still the usual form of government. The people still accepted a new king, and it seems that they had the power to reject a physically unfit king. There was an elaborate consecration ceremony with sacrifices and prayers, and it

was believed that the ceremony raised him to a higher status than ordinary humanity. The *Sabha* and the *Samiti* still continued to function and there were prayers to establish concord between the king and the assembly. The king wanted their support in some cases, but the details are not clear. It appears that they deliberated upon matters of public importance such as war, peace and finance and in some cases, decided law-suits about land, debts, inheritance and criminal offences. Miscreants were punished with fines and trial by ordeal was sometimes resorted to.

Officers.

But the king and his officers seem to have grown greatly in importance. The officers were collectively known as *Vīras* or *Ratnins* and included the queen (*Mahishi*), the prince, the priest (*Purohita*), the commander (*Senānī*). the collector of taxes (*Saṁgrahitri*) and others. The court was full of nobles (*Rājanya*) who were relatives of the king.

Origin of caste.

Much discussion has taken place about the origin of the caste-system, and even now no satisfactory theory has been propounded. To some, the system is entirely based upon occupation, which gradually became hereditary, and endogamy, *i.e.*, the laws forbidding the intermarriage of castes, developed later on. To others, it is a matter of race, the greater the degree of Aryan blood in a particular caste the higher being its position in the social hierarchy. There is, however, growing a school of thought which thinks that the system of hereditary occupations and endogamy existed among the non-Aryan population of India and was adopted by the Aryans to suit their own purposes.

In the early Vedic times, there seems to have been a three-fold division of the society into Brahmana (priest), Rājanya[2] (nobility) and Vis (the common-folk). This division was more or less occupational, and had no similarity with the caste-system as it developed later on. There is no trade of hereditary occupation and endogamy, and the people was one undivided whole.

In the later Vedic times, we find the system at a more developed stage. The growing complexity of the rituals required a sacerdotal class, which could devote itself wholly to the sacred profession; the gradual growth of royal courts and functions developed a nobility; th specialization and growth of industries and the consequent increase in trade and commerce helped in the development of an artisan and trading class; ad to this the aboriginals engulfed in the society: and we have a four-fold classification into Brahmana, Rājanya or Kshatriya, Vis or Vaisya and Sudra. At this stage, the Aryans might have taken a hint from the non-Aryan social organization with its rules of endogamy and hereditary occupation, which transformed these classes into castes. But matters might have been much more complex than what has been suggested above.

Already in the later Vedic Age, the Brahmana had attained to a position of superiority over others.

The Brahmanas.

He was looked upon as 'a god among men' and as 'the source of the

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[2] It is often said that the second caste was the 'warrior-caste.' The truth is that the Rājanyas or Kshatriyas were the aristocratic section of the population, attached to royal courts, while the army was formed by the common people.

Kshatriyas.' But he was expected to maintain a fairly high standard of excellence: he was to know the details of the rituals and his speech was to be pure.

The Kshatriyas.

The Kshatriyas took a deep interest in the philosophy of the age. They sometimes quarrelled with the Brahmanas over the performance of sacrifices. In royal courts the Brahmanas thronged for patronage and discussion. By their superior learning individual Kshatriyas sometimes raised themselves to the status of a Brahmana.

The Vaisyas.

The Vaisyas must have been a composite people, distinguished from the two higher castes by their lack of priestly and noble blood and from the Sudras by their being free men. The position of a Vaisya does not seem to have been very happy: in one text it is said that 'he is to be tributary to another, to be lived upon by another and to be oppressed at will by another.' But the richer section among them, called Sreshthin (the modern *Seth*) and Grihapati (householder) were greatly respected in the royal court.

The Sudras.

The lot of the Sudra was hard indeed. The same text which defines the position of the Vaisya speaks thus of the Sudra: 'He is to be the servant of another, to be expelled at will and to be slain at will.' Persons consecrated for a sacrifice must not converse with him. But he had a definite place in society and was employed for domestic service. Still it is impossible that the whole population of the Sudras was attached to the Aryans as servants: no doubt they followed agricultural or other pursuits like the Vaisyas, and except in matters of

ritual to which the Sudra had no right, the distinction between the Sudras and the Vaisyas must have been more theoretical than real.

Agriculture.

Agriculture was greatly improved and the varieties of crops raised were many, including rice, wheat, oil-seeds, etc. Sometimes as many as twenty-four bullocks were yoked to a plough. The fertile plains which the people occupied yielded two harvests a year. There is no evidence of horticulture or fruit-cultivation.

Industries.

Industries had increased by leaps and bounds and were now greatly specialized. We hear of hunters and fishermen, ploughmen, domestic servants, field-servants, basket-makers, rope-makers, washermen and dyers, weavers, barbers, smiths, potters and others.

Learning.

The hymns of the Vedas were regarded as sacred even at this period and it was considered a sacrilege to put them to writing. The priests learnt by heart the hymns composed by their ancestors, and thus the whole Vedic text was handed down hereditarily. Various devices were hit upon and adopted to keep the text uncorrupted and one such notable attempt we find in the *Pāda-patha* of the *Rigveda-Samhita,* composed by Sakalya about the tenth century B.C. It is a work in which each individual word of every hymn is put down separately to ensure the correctness of the text. Some works on grammar also must have existed, but all of them are now lost.

Language.

By this time the priests had developed an idiom of their own, and it was impossible for the commonfolk to keep pace with the growing complexities of grammar. The language

of the ordinary people must have been modified by their contact with the non-Aryans, and the result was the growth of the Prākrita (common) dialects, usually called the Prākrit. It is but natural that each locality should have developed a Prākrit of its own; at the early stage there were three such, the *Sauraseni*, spoken in the Surasena districts, *i.e.*, the central Doab, the *Magadhi* of Magadha or East India and the *Mahārāshtrī* possibly of the west. In time, each of these developed branches of its own and was even used for literary purposes. Thus, from the Vedic language, there were two independent developments, *viz.*, Sanskrit, the form of which was fixed by the illustrious grammarian Panini about the seventh century B.C. (*vide infra*), and the Prakrits, which being the popular tongue, went on changing with the times. Sanskrit must have been spoken by cultured people and was the *lingua franca* of th learned all over India.

Writing.

The earliest evidence of the existence of writing in India (barring Mohenjo-daro and other pre-historic writings) is found only from the fifth or fourth century B.C., but there can be no doubt that it was known much earlier. Some scholars have sought to prove a Phoenician origin of Brahmi, the native script of India, from which all the vernacular scripts of India and Burma are derived. But it is possible that it had a native origin, though its derivation from the Mohenjo-daro script has not been definitely proved.

Medicine.

The frequent killing of animals and offering their different limbs to the fire as oblation acquainted the people with rudiments of anatomy. But medicine seems to have been still

primitive and over-ridden by notions of magic and spells.

Astronomy.

There was a great advance in the knowledge of astronomy. The people had some definite knowledge about the *tithis* or phases of the moon;—and the ecliptic was divided into twenty-seven mansions, each called a Nakshatra.

Religion.

In religion we find a great difference in outlook between the Early Vedic and Later Vedic Ages. Sacrifice became the all-important thing in worship; gods were subordinated to them and it was believed that they must submit to the sacrifice if properly performed. Hymns were regarded as spells to be used in sacrifices and were no longer the outburst of a poetic wonder at some natural power. The minutest details of rituals were worked out and it must have taken no inconsiderable time for one to master them. We hear of sacrifices lasting several years and requiring the services of as many as seventeen priests, each with definite business at different stages. Countless varieties of rituals were planned out, each to ensure some success or other. The pantheon remained very much the same, save the important addition of Prajāpati, the Creator, who again is said to have performed sacrifices to create the world.

Philosophy.

But in the Upanishads, which are ten or twelve in number and form the 'knowledge-branch' (*jnāna-kāṇda*) of the Vedas, we breathe an entirely different atmosphere. The inquisitive mind entered deep into the problems of creation, life and death and came to the conclusion that there is one unchanging principle (*Brahman*) beyond

the universe,—the creator and controller of the whole order. Our souls are but small particles of that infinite principle, to which they return after death. Side by side we also find the doctrine that most souls have to be born again and again on this earth, and reap the fruits of the actions (*karman*) of their previous lives; but once one succeeds in the extremely difficult task of realizing the nature of our souls, and thereby *Brahman*, one is freed from re-birth.

The Upanishads claim to contain revealed truths, still they are free from dogmas and represent in words the earliest groping of mankind for a solution of the mysteries of the universe. Similes and metaphors are heaped one upon the other to impress the truth on the mind, and there are sometimes pieces of marvellous beauty and excellence.

The Upanishadic doctrines were discussed in the royal courts especially that of Janaka of Videha, who arranged conversations among scholars, and himself took the deepest interest in them. It has been suggested that all these doctrines were the creation of the Kshatriyas, while the Brahmanas devoted themselves solely to rituals. However, the Brahmanas did not delay to adapt themselves to these new ideas and Brahmana scholars like Yajñavalkya were the acknowledged leaders of Upanishadic thought. We have also the names of some ladies, such as Gargi and Maitreyi, who were thought fit enough to discuss these doctrines on an equal footing with men.

CHAPTER IV

THE EARLIER DYNASTIES

The Puranas.

The Hindus have a class of texts known as the Puranas, which form an encyclopaedia of religion, folklore, mythology about creation, gods, ages of the world, description of holy places, ceremonies, rituals, etc.[1] Most of them are sectarian in character and are meant to exalt this god or the other. Different portions of the Puranas were composed in different ages, sometimes as late as the mediaeval times, but there are portions which are really old, or, at least, are based on ancient tradition. Some of them contain the genealogies of kings from the beginning of the creation to comparatively recent ages. The traditions preserved in them, however, are utterly confused, and sometimes the details given in one Purana are at variance with those of another. This had led the earlier scholars to be sceptical about the Puranic genealogies; indeed, most of them began their history from sixth century B.C., as from that period onwards we have other sources of information.

The attitude, however, is unreasonable. The corruptions in the texts do not justify our utterly

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1 The Puranas are eighteen in number and are named Agni, Kūrma, Śiva, Skanda, Vārāha, Garuḍa, Nārada, Padma, Vāmana, Vishnu, Vāyu, Ādi (or Brahma), Matsya, Bhāgavata, Brahmavaivarta, Linga, Mārkandeya and Bhavishya

rejecting them: we must make patient attempts to extract the true history of the ancient dynasties from the genealogical portions of the Puranas and similar portions of the Epics—the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana*. The task, however, is beset with difficulties, and still a long way has to be covered before we get reliable facts. Below is given a more or less connected account of the Puranic dynasties, though the uncertain details have been left out altogether.

A Misnomer

The kings for the knowledge of whom we are indebted to the Puranas are sometimes called the 'Puranic kings.' This does not mean that these kings lived in an age when the Puranas were composed or that there was any 'Puranic age' in India. In fact, the earlier of these kings must have lived when some of the Vedas were composed and continued till a much later date. The terms 'Puranic kings' and 'Puranic dynasties' are therefore devoid of any chronological significance or definition of time.

It will be seen below that the account of the Puranas does not always tall with the facts derived from Vedic sources.. Tribal names such as Anu, Puru, Yadu, Druhyu and Turvasa, are found here as names of individual kings. Whether the Vedic tribal names are derived from the kings who ruled over the tribes or whether the kings owed their names to the tribes over which they ruled, it is impossible to decide.

Manu.

The Puranic lists are mixed up with mythology and begin their history of the world (*i.e.*, India) with Brahmā, the Creator of the universe. Fourth in descent from Brahmā was Manu, the progenitor of the human race, and with him

the royal genealogies begin. Manu is conceived of as the son of Vivasvat (the Sun), and the kings directly descended from him belong to the Solar Race. He had a daughter named Ilā who was married to Budha, the son of the Moon: from this union sprang the huge Lunar Race.

The Ikshvākus.

Manu's son was Ikshvāku, the first ancestor of the Solar Race, which ruled over Kosala (Oudh) and had two capitals (Ayodhya and Sravasti modern Set-Mahet in Gonda district U.P.). He had two sons, Vikukshi who continued the main line in Kosala and Nimi, who went over further east to Videha (North Bihar) and founded his capital at Mithila. In the dynasty of Vikukshi was born Dasaratha, famous in the epic *Ramayana*. His son was the hero Rama, later on regarded as an incarnation of the god Vishnu, who was married to Sita, the daughter of Sīradhvaja Janaka of Videha.

A direct descendant of the Kosala line was Prasenajit, who was reigning at Sravasti when Buddha was preaching his doctrine. At that time the Videha area was held by a powerful tribe named Lichchhavi, of which we shall hear more later on.

The Purus.

Pururavas was the son of Budha and Ilā and is regarded as the ancestor of the Lunar Race. He established himself at Pratishthana at the confluence of the Jamna and the Ganges on the other side of modern Allahabad. In his dynasty were born five princes, whose names we are already familiar with as Rigvedic tribes: Anu, Druhyu, Turvasu (Turvasa in the Vedas), Yadu and Puru. The descendants of Anu and Druhyu continue to occupy the Punjab and the North-West, and seem to have spread

beyond India as well; they are not connected with the main currents of Indian history. The family of Turvasu soon became extinct and lost its identity. The descendants of Puru and Yadu held the central theatre of Indian history.

The Kurus.

In the line of Puru was born a powerful king Kuru (again the name of a tribe in the Vedas) whose descendants held the Kurukshetra region with their capital at Hastinapura (probably near Meerut). A prince of this line was Śāntanu whose sons were Bhishma and Vichitravirya. As Bhishma remained a celibate and renounced all claims to the throne, the latter became king and got two sons, Dhritarashtra and Pandu. Dhritarashtra is reported to have a hundred sons, Duryodhana and others, and Pandu five, Yudhishthira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva. Dhritarashtra being blind, could not get the throne which passed on to Pandu.

The Bharata War.

From boyish pranks there grew up a quarrel between the sons of Dhritarashtra and Pandu and ultimately developed into a quarrel for the throne. A compromise seems to have taken place, as a result of which the sons of Dhritarashtra ruled over Hastinapura and the other party over Indraprastha (Inderpat near Delhi). But the mutual jealousies did not cease and later on developed into a fierce internecine quarrel which had to be settled at the point of the sword. At Kurukshetra (near Ambala) the great Bharata Battle was fought for eighteen days in which all the leading kings of Northern and Central India took the side of one of the parties and in which Duryodhana's party was entirely defeated and annihilated. The details are found in the epic called

Mahabharata. It seems, however, that there is much of myth in the story, and there is a probability of the Pandus being entirely unconnected with the main Kuru lineage. But we need not doubt the incident of the Bharat War. It has been variously dated from B.C. 3000 to 900; a date between B.C. 1500 to 1300 may be a probable approximation.

After this success, Yudhishthira placed Parikshit, the grandson of his third brother Arjuna, on the throne of Hastinapura which had been acquired as a result of the war, and retired from the world with his brothers and wife. Four generations after Parikshit the Ganges entirely washed Hastinapur away, and the capital had to be shifted to Kausambi on the Jumna (modern Kosam, thirty miles from Allahabad). At the time of Buddha, the king was Udayana, famous in legend.

The Yadus.

The descendants of Yadu, known as the Yadavas, gradually spread far and wide, from Mathura to Gujarat and had many branches ruling over different parts of these regions, some of their names being the Sātvatas, Bhojas, Haihayas, Chedis, Vidarbhas, Vrishnis, etc. It was thus a very powerful line and to the pious Hindu its importance was enhanced by the fact that in this dynasty was born Krishna, who is sometimes regarded as an incarnation of the god Vishnu and at other times Vishnu himself. Krishna was the sister's son of Kansa of Mathura and had his capital at Dwarka (otherwise known as Duaravati and Kusasthalī) in Gujarat. In the Bharata War Krishna was the brain behind Yudhishthira's party and won the battle by his tactics. He died soon after the war. According to some Puranas, the *Kali-yuga*, the last of the Four

Krishna.

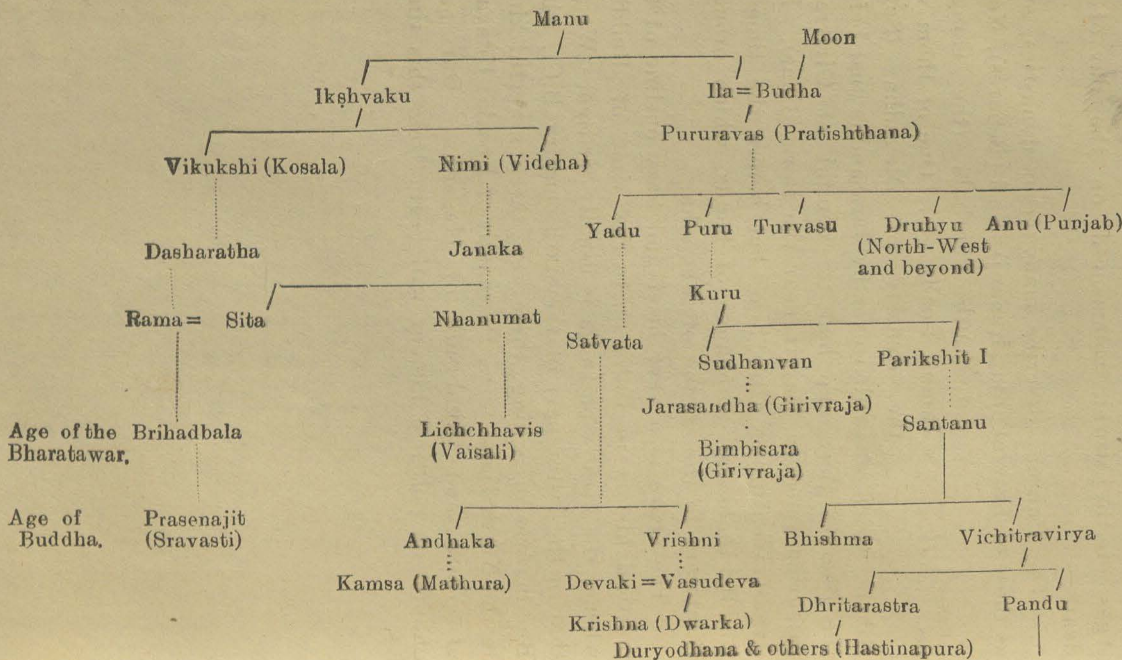
Ages of the world, commenced on the day of his death.

The Puranas describe many other dynasties, such as those of Kanyakubja (Kanauj), Kasi (Benares), North and South Panchala (the Ganges-Jumna Doab), etc. One of them was the dynasty of Magadha (South Bihar), which was ruled over by Jarasandha just before the Bharata War, and had its capital at Girivraja-rajagriha (modern Rajgir near the town Bihar). His dynasty continued after him, but before the time of Buddha there was a change of hands, which brought Bimbisara to the throne of Magadha.

Other dynasties.

The above is a very brief and hazy outline of the political history of India up to the time of Buddha, whence the history of India is usually written. We see that in the latter part of the sixth century B.C., when Buddha was preaching, there were three powerful kings in the North India, *viz.*, Prasenajit of Kosala, Udayana of Vatsa and Bimbisara of Magadha. Our next chapter on political history will begin from this time.

Genealogy of the Earlier Dynasties



Yudhishthira (Indraprastha) Bhima Arjuna etc.

Parikshit (Hastinapura)

Nimichakra (Kausambi)

Udayana (Kausambi)

N.B.—1. Dotted vertical lines indicate that there was a gap of several generations between the two kings that they join.

2. A horizontal bar indicates that there was the end of a dynasty and the beginning of a new one.

CHAPTER V

EARLY RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS

Background.

It has been said above in connection with the Upanishads that a section of the population refused to accept rituals and sacrifices as the highest aim of life. Some of the Upanishads avowedly declare that sacrifices do not lead one far and knowledge alone is conducive to the highest bliss. Side by side, we can also trace the growth of the institution of asceticism: those adopting it had to renounce the world and its pleasures for the hard life of a mendicant, to depend on begging for food, and to make salvation the only end of life. It is possible though not certain, that such ascetic sects were more common in the eastern districts of India than in the heart of Aryandom. Jainism and Buddhism were by no means an innovation or isolated episode in Indian religious thought, but were only two of such sects, though they were destined to be more important and permanent than any other.

A. Jainism

The Tirthankaras.

The Jainas believe that their religion was the outcome of the teachings of twenty-four *Tirthankaras* or saints, all Kṣhatriyas, one coming after another. The first twenty-two are so legendary in character that it is



Buddha

hardly possible to say anything about them.[1] The twenty-third *Tirthankara* Parsvanatha seems to have been a real historical person. He is said to have been a prince of Benares and may have lived and preached in the eighth century B.C. He forbade his disciples to kill living beings, to possess any property, to steal and to utter falsehood, and appears to have left a well-formed organization behind him. At Parasnath in the Hazaribagh district, Bihar, there is a temple sacred to him.

Mahavira.

The next and last *Tirthankara* was Vardhamana, the son of Siddhartha, a rich nobleman of Vaisali (modern Basarh in the Muzaffarpur district, Bihar). He was married to a lady named Yasoda and became the father of a daughter. At the age of thirty, he left his home and spent some years with an ascetic Gosala. After twelve years of hard life during which he wandered about in East India, Vardhamana declared that he had attained the knowledge of the way to salvation, and began to call himself *Jina* ('conqueror') and *Mahavira* ('the great hero'). For thirty years more he preached his religion in Kosala, Magadha and further east, and died at Pāvā (in the Patna district). The Jainas themselves place the event in B.C. 527 but little reliance can be placed on this traditional date, and there is a probability of the event having occurred in B.C. 470.

It is not known how Mahavira became the head of

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1 Their names are Rishabhadeva, Ajitanatha, Sambhavanatha, Abbinandana, Sumatinatha, Padmaprabhu, Suparsvanatha, Chandraprabhu, Suvidhinatha, Sitalanatha, Sreyanisanatha, Vasupujya, Vimalanatha, Anantanatha, Dharmanatha, Santinatha, Kunthunatha, Avanatha, Mallinatha, Suvrata, Naminatha and Neminatha.

the disciples of Parśva. However, he soon identified himself with that sect and to the four existing tenets of Parśva, he added a fifth one enjoining a chaste life. He also exhorted his followers to go about naked and laid the greatest stress on the sanctity of animal life.

His teachings.

Like all other Indian philosophers, Jainism believes in the theory of re-birth and *Karman* (the accumulated effect of the actions done in the past lives). Human soul is in a state of bondage under passions and desires collected through hundreds of previous births. And it is by dint of continued efforts through several lives that the forces binding the soul can be counteracted and the soul itself rendered passionless. Then comes the stage when the soul gets the three Jewels of Right Knowledge, Right Faith and Right Conduct. The liberation of the soul is then ensured and after the death of the body, the free soul passes into the land of the Siddhas of eternal bliss and rests in a state of ceaseless inactivity. There is then no accumulation of *Karman*, no re-birth, but only eternal beatitude.

Mahavira himself lived a life of extreme asceticism and self-torture and wanted his followers to do the same. Death by starvation was held to be an act of the highest merit and no amount of austerities was considered enough.

The followers of Mahavira were at first called the *Nirgranthas* (the fetterless ones), but later on came to be known as the Jainas after their master Jina. Mahavira appointed his chief disciple Indrabhūti to succeed him as the head of the community. In this way the

History of Jainism.

office of the pontiff devolved on one and then on another, till, about the middle of the fourth century B.C., Bhadrabāhu became the leader of the Jainas. Tradition says that during his regime a terrible famine broke out in Magadha, and Bhadrabāhu and his disciples were so hard-pressed that they had to migrate to a place in Mysore. After residing there for a few years they returned to Magadha and found that the Jainas living there had discarded Mahavira's teaching and had taken to clothes in the meantime. Thus originated a great schism which divided the community into two sects, the Digambaras preferring to remain naked and the Svetambaras wearing white apparel.

At this time, about B.C. 300, Sthūlabhadra, the successor of Bhadrabāhu, convoked an assembly at Pataliputra (Patna), the capital of Magadha, to collect the genuine canons of the faith. A portion of it had already been lost, but whatever was found, was now taken down. The Digambaras had nothing to do with the Council and declared that the original canon had been irretrievably lost and that the scripture as decided by the Pataliputra Council was spurious.

The Canon.

In the centuries following this, Jainism gradually disappeared from Magadha and came to be centred at Mathura and in Central India, Gujarat and the Deccan. In the fifth or sixth century A.D., another Council was held at Valabhi (modern Walah on the Gulf of Cambay) under the presidency of Devarddhi. The existing manuscripts were collected, codified and formed into a systematic canon. The scriptures of the Svetambaras consist of eleven sections (*anga*), twelve sub-sections (*upanga*),

ten miscellaneous collections (*prakirna*), six statute books (*chheda-sāstra*) and six fundamental books (*mūlasūtra*). They are written in Ardha-māgadhi, a form of the Prakrits.

Even at the beginning, the followers of Mahavira were grouped under two heads, the monks, who had renounced the world for an ascetic life, and the lay-worshippers who through followers of Mahavira remained in the family and made the life of the monks possible by giving them alms. The Jaina lay-worshippers have all along been a very strong community, eminent for their riches and charity and still form the merchant class of Western India and Rajputana.

B. Buddhism

Siddhartha Gautama, as Buddha was called before his enlightenment, was the son of Śuddhodana, the chief of the Śākya clan of Kapilavastu, owning the suzerainty of the monarch of Kosala. He was born in the garden of Lumbini (modern Rummin-dei in the Gorakhpur district). The date of his birth has been the subject of a protracted controversy, but ultimately the choice has been narrowed down to two dates, B.C. 623 and 563; of these the latter suits the conditions better and may be provisionally taken as a working hypothesis.

Buddha.

Later tradition tells us how the royal splendour failed to captivate the prince's heart even from his childhood, how the sight of an old man, a sick man, a dead body and an ascetic intensified his disgust towards the world, and how at length he left home at the age of thirty in search of truth. The story shows that Gautama's mind was perturbed by the eternal problems



Buddha

of life and suffering, death and immortality,—questions that had occupied many others, both before and after him.

After leaving home he associated with various ascetic sects and tried many means to come to the truth. His severe penances drew towards him five admirers; but he realized the futility of rigorous hardships, gave up fasting and took to an easier life, thus alienating his companions. Under a banyan tree beside the river Nairanjanā at Uruvelā (near Gaya), he sat down in meditation, determined to arrive at the solution of the problems, and when he got up, he found that he had discovered the cure for all pains. Then Buddha, or the Enlightened One, went to Mṛigadāva (Sarnath near Benares) and preached his first sermon to the five monks who had deserted him. For the rest of his life he travelled throughout Kosala and Magadha, preaching and delivering sermons and making conversions, till he died at the age of eighty at Kusinagara (modern Kasia in the Gorakhpur district), patronized by many royal courts and revered by thousands of disciples. Accepting B.C. 563 as the date of his birth, his death or *Parinirvāṇa* as it is called, may be dated B.C. 483.

His teachings.

Buddha had left home to discover the means of putting an end to pain and sorrow. This led him to enquire into the causes of pain and sorrow, and he found it in worldly attachment (*tṛishnā*) which brings in its train *Karman* and a cycle of re-births. To put a stop to worldly attachment and the consequent sorrow, he recommended an Eightfold Path of Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Rapture. This

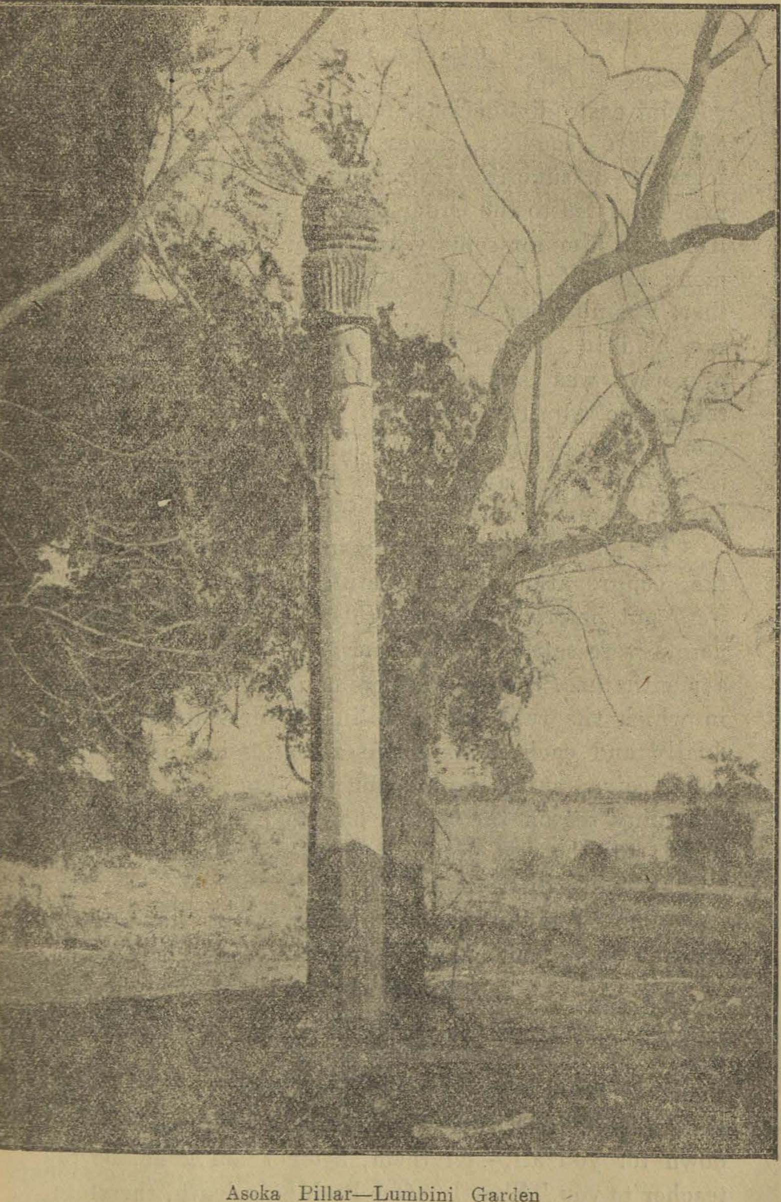
path would lead to the achievement of *Nirvāṇa* or salvation, which according to the usual view means a state in which the individual altogether ceases to exist. He also prescribed to his followers a strict code of morality and enjoined on them the adoption of a Middle Path of the avoidance of extreme asceticism and vile pleasure-seeking. Judged by the modern standard, however, the life of a Buddhist monk distinctly leaned towards asceticism. Non-violence towards life was recognized as a principle, but it was not given that exaggerated importance as in Jainism: Buddha even permitted his followers to take meat under certain conditions.

Like Mahavira, Buddha accepted without criticism the doctrines of *Karman* and re-birth, and emphasized the transitory nature of the world and its objects. At the same time he refused to be drawn into any theoretical discussion about the nature of soul or God and maintained silence when asked about them. He was merely concerned with the deliverance of man from sorrow, and other things were beyond his purpose.

The simplicity of the creed, charmingly preached in the popular language, the attractive personality of

The Church.

the preacher and the patronage extended to the faith by the royal courts attracted myriads towards the new creed. Like the Jainas, the Buddhists too were divided into monks and lay-worshippers (*bhikṣhu* and *upāsaka*) the former organized into the *Sangha* or congregation, the number of which increased with the spread of the faith. Minute rules were laid down by Buddha himself about the life to be led by the monks in the congregation. Membership was open to all above the age of fifteen



Asoka Pillar—Lumbini Garden

without caste distinctions, but exceptions were made in the case of convicts, slaves or persons with bodily deformities or suffering from contagious diseases. A new man admitted to the Order chose a preceptor and had to live with him for some years, after which he became a monk himself. Life was strictly ruled by laws and there was no room for personal like or dislike. Property was held in common and the possession of private property was strictly forbidden. Buddha at first refused to admit women into the Order, but at the intervention of his foster-mother he unwillingly allowed them to become nuns, and ordained that they should have no connection with the monks.

The procedure of meeting in a general assembly of the congregation is interesting. Resolutions (*jñapti*) were put before the House three times and disputed points were settled by a majority of votes. Four times a month the *Prātimoksha* ceremony was gone through, in which the rules of discipline were read out individually and each monk made a confession of his sins and received suitable punishment. For four months of the rainy season the monks had to live in the monasteries; for the rest of the year they preached in the neighbouring districts.

The Councils.

When Buddha was on his death-bed he said to Ananda, one of his chief disciples: 'It may be Ananda, that in some of you the thought may arise, "The word of the Master is ended, we have no teacher more!" But it is not thus, Ananda, that you should regard it. The truths and rules of the Order which I have set forth and laid down for you all,—let them, after I am gone, be the teacher to you.' Shortly after Buddha's death, therefore,

the First Buddhist Council was convoked at Rajagriha to codify his sayings. The Second Council was held a hundred years later to discuss the legality of certain deeds of the monks of Vaisali. The Third Council met at Pataliputra under the patronage of Asoka, while another was convened in Kashmir in the reign of Kanishka.

By this time the Buddhist community was divided into schools such as *Sthaviravāda* and *Mahāsāṁghika*.

The Schools.

But in the second century A.D., or even earlier, occurred the great schism, which divided Buddhism into two great schools *Hīnayāna* and *Mahāyāna*. The Mahāyānists declared that with the attainment of Nirvāṇa, man will not return to this earth again, and therefore he is incapable of doing any work, not even service to humanity. But those individuals who have not yet attained Nirvāṇa, but are striving to attain it, can do real good to the suffering world. The Bodhisattva, who is such an individual preparing through several lives to attain the state of Buddha or the completely Enlightened One, is the real benefactor of humanity. The Mahāyānists, therefore, set greater store by the Bodhisattva ideal than even that of Buddha. The Bodhisattva idea was known to the Buddhists even before; but it is the Mahāyānists who gave it a prominent position and made it a cult. Side by side, there developed a number of gods and goddesses, with elaborate descriptions of their features and characters. A great exponent of this school was Nāgārjuna, who lived in the second or third century A.D. In time Mahāyāna too was subdivided into a number of Sects, such as *Śūnyavāda*, *Vijñanavāda*, etc., each with a philosophy of its own.

As a result of the missionary activities of Asoka (see Chapter VIII), who ruled India in the third century B.C., Buddhism spread all over India and eve Ceylon and Burma. In the early years of the Christian era and the century preceding it, Buddhism had many strongholds in India, in the north-west, at Mathura, in Central India and on the eastern and western coasts. Very slowly, however, it lost its hold everywhere except in Bengal and Bihar, where the Pāla kings (ninth to twelfth centuries A.D.) patronized it as a state religion. With the conquest of East India by the Muslims, Buddhism utterly disappeared from the land of its birth. But outside India, Ceylon, Burma and Śiam still profess *Hīnayāna*, while *Mahāyāna* is prevalent in Tibet, China and Japan. The spread of Buddhism to these countries will be dealt with later on.

Spread of Buddhism.

The Buddhist scriptures are divided into three sections, called 'receptacles' (*Tripitaka*). The *Vinaya-pitaka* generally deals with the rules guiding the life of the monks and the monastery. *The Sutra-pitaka* contains the sayings of Buddha and is the most important part of the scriptures. The third division is the *Abhidharma-pitaka*, dealing with the philosophical development of the teachings of Buddha. Every sect of Buddhism had a *Tripitaka* of its own; the Pali *Tripitaka* of Ceylon, Burma and Śiam, though sometimes regarded as the most genuine, is in reality only one such version of the scriptures, preserved by the *Sthāviravāda* sect of Ceylon, whence it spread to Burma and Śiam. Its language is Pali, one of the popular dialects of ancient India.

The Scriptures.

Jainism and Buddhism.

The two teachers, Mahavira and Buddha, never met each other and the scriptures show that no love was lost between them. But there were some superficial points of resemblance between them, as both the systems had their origin in the same locality and were the outcome of the same feeling against lifeless ritualism. Both discountenanced the supremacy of the Brahmanas, and were distinctly anti-Brahmanical in the sense that they did not pretend to derive their teachings from the Vedas. There was some similarity also in the organization of the Church, the rules about the conduct of monks and the division of the followers into monks and lay-worshippers. But the similarity does not extend to any fundamentals. Their conception of salvation was different: to the Jainas it was the passing of the soul into eternal happiness, while according to the usual Buddhist view it meant the total extinction of the individual. The methods for the achievement of their respective goals also had not much in common; though pure conduct is emphasized by both, the Buddhists did not believe in the efficacy of self-denial, nudity and death by starvation which are all lauded by the Jainas. Jainism took greater care to organize the laity and was less mindful of preaching its doctrines outside India, and in its later stages it did not retain its exclusive attitude towards Hinduism. For these reasons it still has some hold on the population of India, a privilege which Buddhism does not enjoy.

Both Buddhism and Jainism have some common features which they borrowed from other sources. The institution of asceticism and the general rules guiding the ascetic life were not their invention, but were

suggested to them by other ascetic organizations that had existed long before them. The doctrines of *Karman* and *re-birth*, which were taken for granted by both the systems, had already been foreshadowed in the Upanishads.

C. Other Sects

Buddha constantly refers in his discourses to five contemporary preachers, of whom mention may be made of Nirgrantha Jñātripura and Gosāla Mashkariputra. The former has been identified with Mahavira himself and the latter with Gosāla with whom Mahavira spent some years of his mendicant life. Both the Jaina and Buddhist scriptures pour forth abuses on this teacher and vilify him in all possible ways, so that it is difficult to find out his real teaching from a mass of prejudiced literature. It seems that from an observation of plant-life, Gosāla concluded that man too is subject to the laws of nature. Action therefore cannot lead a man out of the inevitable and a quietist view of life is desirable. His followers were known as the Ajivakas or Ājīvakas, and centred round Sravasti, the capital of Kosala, where Gosāla preached and died sixteen years before Mahavira. Ajivakism altogether disappeared from India in the fourteenth century A.D., after having shifted from province to province.

The Ājīvakas.

Apart from the protestant sects dealt with above, there were developing even in the fold of orthodox Hinduism some other sects which did not distinctly repudiate the Vedas and which became very prominent in the later history

Another trend.

of Hinduism. The feature of these sects was the worship of one particular god as the supreme deity. About this time the Vedic gods were being shuffled, some receding into the background and others coming to the forefront. To the latter class belong Vishnu and Rudra, both different in character from the Vedic deities of those names.

Saivism.

We have already seen that the worship of Śiva goes back to pre-Aryan times, a prototype of Śiva having been worshipped at Mohenjo-daro. By undiscernible processes this god became identified with Vedic Rudra and came to the front rank among Hindu gods. He was conceived at once as benign and terrible; a great *yogin* roaming about in cremation grounds, draped in hide, and surrounded by wild animals and ghosts; living at his residence in the Kailasa mountain, fondly attached to his family; revelling in dance and music.

In the early history of Śaivism the name of Lakulīśa stands out prominent. Orthodox opinion regards him as an incarnation of Śiva, but he might have in reality been a historical figure who founded the Pāśupāta sect of the Śaivas. The Pāśupātas wore yellow apparel, holding in the hand a trident and wandering in cremation grounds. An extreme sect of the Śaivas was the Kāpālikas, who followed some uncanny practices.

From very early times Śiva has been worshipped as the *phallus* (*Linga*), which is even now extremely common in India.

Bhāgavatism.

The Vaishnavas or Bhāgavatas, as the worshippers of Vishnu were called, inculcated devotion to Vāsudeva-Krishna, the hero of the *Mahābhārata*, who was identified with Vishnu, the

Supreme God. A mass of legends grew round the person of Krishna and his childhood. Mathura and Brindavana, the two cities associated with his early life, were the stronghold of Bhāgavatism, but later on it spread all over India and became very popular owing to the human elements contained in it. The personal love and devotion (*bhakti*) of the worshipper towards his god, who was given a human touch, made the system very attractive to the people. It came to be believed that Vishnu had undergone many incarnations in order to save the world from some impending catastrophe. Rama, the hero of the *Ramayana*, later on came to be regarded as one of such incarnations.

D. The Six Systems

Besides these religious sects India was developing some philosophical systems, the adherents of which never organized themselves into religious communities. These are: Sāṁkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeshika, Pūrva-Mīmaṁsā and Uttara-Mīmāṁsā or Vedānta, together forming the six systems of Indian philosophy. All admit the authority of the Vedas, but while the last two really derive their inspiration from the Vedas, the first four owe only a theoretical allegiance to them and seem to have an independent origin. It is more than likely that one of them at least, Yoga, originated among the people of the Indus civilisation.

Sāṁkhya.

The Sāṁkhya system of Kapila, which orthodox Hinduism at first denounced as non-Vedic, appears to have been the oldest of these systems, though the texts dealing with them are much later. It starts with the existence of a

pri-mordial principle (*prakriti*) which represents a perfectly balanced state of three qualities (*guṇa*) of illumination, action and inertia (*sattva, rajas* and *tamas*). The souls (*purusha*), which are distinct in each individual, are utterly detac'ed from this principle, with which they identify themselves in their folly and bring misery on themselves. Salvation lies in the annulment of the identification of the *prakriti* and *purusha*. The way to attain it is Yoga, which has been propounded in details by the sage Pātanjali. Yoga is meditation through certain graduated physical and psychological processes.

Yoga.

Nyāya of Gotama and Vaiśeshika of Kaṇāda then stand chiefly on reason. According to them the world is made of indivisible and eternal atoms. The soul comes to misery when it is brought into contact with the world through the mind and gets attached to its pleasures. With the removal of ignorance this bondage is broken and there will be no more re-births. Though agreeing in their conclusions the two systems differ in that Nyāya gives more prominence to logic and Vaiśeshika to physics and metaphysics.

Nyāya and Vaiśeshika.

Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā of Jaimini is primarily concerned with the principles of Vedic interpretation. It holds that sound is eternal, and the Veda, being a collection of sounds is also eternal, being created by nobody (*a-paurusheya*). Later on this system developed some philosophy, in which salvation is said to be the outcome of the dissociation of the self from its fleeting qualities, such as knowledge, feelings, etc.

Purva-Mimamsa.

Uttara-Mīmāṁsā or Vedānta of Bādarāyaṇa is based on the Upanishads and was later on developed by Śankarāchārya in the eighth century A.D. It teaches that the self only is real, without change and without a dual (*advaita*), the manifold world of phenomena being only an illusion or phantom (*māyā*). It is through prolonged efforts of meditation and self-analysis that man can overcome the obsession of the manifoldness of the world, the true nature of which is hidden to us through ignorance. Then, man obtains salvation and the individual self merges itself completely in the highest self, *i.e.*, Brahman.

Uttara.

The *Bhagavad-Gītā* has a philosophy which differs from all the above. This philosophy is believed to have been expounded to Arjuna, the third Pāndava brother, by Krishna, held to be God himself, on the eve of the Bharata War, the former having refused to fight and slay his own relations. The *Gītā* teaches that one has to act in this world not for any fruit, which is to be dedicated to God. In this way, one is freed from the shackles of *Karman* and gets rid of the bondage of re-birth. It also teaches reverence to the Supreme Being, who delivers His devotee from all sin. The work is still very popular in India and pious Hindus of all sects recite its verses to acquire merit.

The Bhagavad-Gītā.

All Indian philosophical systems, including Jainism and Buddhism, are pervaded by notions of *Karman* and re-birth. They start with the assumption that an individual is born again and again on this earth and the accumulated effects of actions done in

General nature of Indian philosophy.

one life (*Karman*) are carried on to all subsequent lives. The world is full of pains, and re-birth therefore must be put an end to. Though the methods to obtain deliverance and the conception of Salvation are different in each system, the aim is always the same, *viz.*, to get out of the world of pain and cycle of re-birth.

CHAPTER VI

GLEANINGS FROM THE SUTRAS, THE EPICS AND THE JATAKAS

A. The Sutras

The *Sūtra* literature consists of manuals of instructions on various subjects. The Sūtras are composed in the most compressed form of prose to ensure shortness and easy memorization. By the time they were composed, the orthodox Brahmanas had formed themselves into different schools, each of which was developing details of rituals and customary law. It was felt necessary to bring these details to a systematic shape for the guidance of the future generations, and the result was that each school reduced its traditional learning to different manuals. The language of these manuals is so tense and clarity has so often been sacrificed to brevity that sometimes they are unintelligible except with the help of commentaries.

Nature.

The *Vedānga* literature consists of six branches and was meant to supplement and help in the study of the Vedic literature. A part of this literature is in the *Sūtra* style. The six Vedāngas are: (1) *Śikṣhā* (Vedic phonetics), (2) *Chhandas* (Vedic metrics), (3) Vyākaraṇa (Vedic grammar), (4) *Nighanṭu* (Vedic glossary),

The Vedangas.

including the *Nirukta* by *Yāṣka*, (5) Kalpa (rituals), and (6) *Jyotisha* (astronomy). There were several *Sūtra*-texts dealing with each of these, but very few are now available to us. Besides the *Kalpa-Sūtras*, which require separate treatment, mention may here be made of a grammatical treatise, which, though not a part of the *Vedānga* literature, is composed in the *Sūtra* style. It is called the *Ashtādhyāyī*, composed by Pāṇini who lived some time between the eighth and fourth centuries B.C., and is said to have been a native of the North-West. His scientific treatment of the subject-matter and mastery of details have made his work the most popular of its kind in India, and from a short time after its composition right up to the mediaeval times the work has been again and again commented upon. The form of the Sanskrit language that Pāṇini fixed up in his work has till now remained unchanged.

Pāṇini.

The composition of the *Sūtra* literature extended over centuries. It is impossible to fix the dates with any degree of precision, but very roughly it may be said to have ranged from the eighth century to the second century B.C.

Date of the Sūtras.

The *Kalpa-sūtras* are divided into three classes:—(1) the *Śrauta-sūtras*, dealing with Vedic rituals, (2) the *Grihyasūtras*, detailing the domestic rites to be performed round the sacred household fire and (3) the *Dharmasūtras*, giving the customary laws and rules of good behaviour. The nature of the subject-matter makes the *Śrauta-sūtras* useless for our purpose; but the other two branches give a good picture of contemporary society.

The Kalpa-sūtras.

Life in the Sūtras.

The *Grihyasūtras* depict the domestic life of an ideal Aryan as a series of sacraments (*Sanskāra*). From the very birth or even before that, a man has to pass through a number of ceremonies, each coming at a definite stage of life. The *Dharmasūtras*, dealing with the life of a man as a social being, have a wider outlook: and the two combined were expected to govern the whole life of an Aryan, or to be more accurate, of the first three castes together known as the 'twice-born' (*dvija*). At the early age of six a boy was to be sent to the teacher (*āchārya*) who initiated him into his caste and the Vedas (*upanayana*) by investing him with the sacred string according to prescribed rites. As a student the boy had to lead a strenuous life of austerities, in which the humblest service to the teacher and begging for food formed an important part. The teacher in turn taught him the Vedas and looked after his moral welfare. The student life extended over a period of eighteen or twenty-four years, or sometimes even more, after which the youth suitably rewarded his teacher and came back to his household to marry and lead a domestic life. In the selection of a bride, her caste, parentage and status were taken into consideration, and sometimes the bridegroom had to pay the bride's fee to her father. The wedding ceremony was conducted according to Vedic rites, and after that the bride became a member of her husband's family.

The householder had many domestic rites to perform. He was expected daily to feed the gods, demons, the sages, the spirits of the forefathers and his guests before taking food himself. He could now maintain some students and accept gifts from various

quarters, but he must keep up his Vedic studies and perform sacrifices occasionally. Great importance was attached to the life of the householder, as he made the lives of students and hermits possible by his alms.

After the householder's life, a man might retire to the forest with or without his wife and never again enter the village. There he was to live on fruits and practise penances and meditation. After some time he could take to a mendicant's life, wandering at will with no fixed residence, not caring for food and subsisting on whatever came to him without effort.

Thus the texts divide the life of an orthodox Brahmana into four stages (*āshrama*), that of a student, a householder, a retired man and a mendicant. It is useful to recall here that the law-givers describe only what seemed to them a model life and prescribed the norm of an ideal Brahmana. It need not be imagined that every individual scrupulously followed every injunction of the texts, though he might have attempted to come up to the prescribed standard. Moreover, though the duties and ceremonies are avowedly meant for the first three castes, the major portion of them could be applicable only to the Brahmanas.

The four stages.

The caste-system governs the scheme of life and society in the *Dharmasūtras*. The duties of each caste are enumerated in a general manner, but it is added that in cases of hardship a man could follow the profession of the caste next to that to which he belonged. At the same time a Brahmana forced to follow the profession of a Vaisya was forbidden to sell certain articles and to cultivate the soil. Though preference was given to marriage in

Caste.

the same caste, Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas were allowed to take to wife women of the lower castes as well, but a Sudra could have only a Sudra wife. There was discrimination between the children according to the caste of their mothers in inheritance and social standing. 'Reverse marriage,' in which a man married a woman of a higher caste, was violently decried, and the children of such a union had practically no place in society. Purity was connected with the avoidance of the touch of the impure and of food touched by the impure, which included carpenters, physicians, jailors, and miserly persons. But we are told that a Sudra employed in the household of a Brahmana as a domestic servant could be allowed to cook food meant for gods. The Chandalas were regarded as outcasts and were treated as the lowest of the low.

The Brahmanas claimed privileges from the state. They could not be made to undergo any corporal punishment, and the learned among them were to be exempt from taxation. For criminal offences a gradation of punishments was prescribed according to the caste of the offender, and, needless to say, the punishment prescribed for the Brahmana was the highest.

The *Dharmasūtras* also enunciate laws governing inheritance as also criminal laws for the guidance of kings. Besides, they contain rules for the explanation of sins by means of various ceremonies and self-inflicted austere punishments (*prayaschitta*). General common-place rules of morality and piety were laid down, and great importance was attached to forbidden food. Certain kinds of vegetables and flesh of some animals were condemned;

Other rules.

but meat eating was not altogether forbidden. The life of a cow was held to be highly sacred.

Women.

Eight kinds of marriage, varying from the normal priestly marriage to the violently contracted marriage by capture, are mentioned, but the latter types were looked upon with disfavour. The law-givers betray a distinct preference for marrying girls at an early age, though no compulsory rules were laid down. On the death of the husband a childless widow was in certain cases allowed to have one child by a near relative of the dead husband. In religious ceremonies women had little place, and it is declared that they should not be allowed to lead a free life at all, though it is added that they are pure by nature and are not to be forsaken for moral offences.

City-life.

The scheme of life as planned in these texts could suit only those who lived in villages. The ceremonies and rites of the Brahmanas could be properly performed only in villages, and cities were regarded as unclean and unfit for the habitation of the orthodox.

B. The Epics

The two Epics.

We now turn to the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyana*, the two Epics of India, which throughout the ages have had a peculiar hold on the Hindus and have supplied material for numerous poems and dramas. The *Mahābhārata* though mainly describing the war between the Kurus and the sons of Pandu (see Chapter IV), is a vast collection of tales, genealogies, chronicles, moral stories and discourses on morality, statecraft, religion and

philosophy. There were at least three revisions of the text at three different times, each of them leaving the text more voluminous than before. The *Rāmāyana* too contains stories and episodes unconnected with the main story of Rama and Sita, but they were fewer in number, and the text is more homogeneous than that of the *Mahābhārata*. Tradition ascribes the work to Vālmiki, the first poet of India, and this may be true. It is extremely difficult to determine the time when the epics were written. It seems that the composition of the *Mahābhārata* spread over a wider period than the *Rāmāyana*, say from the sixth or seventh century B.C. to the second or third century A.D. The *Rāmāyana* may be dated from the sixth or seventh century to the third and second century B.C.

Date.

Both the epics deal with royal characters and it is therefore natural that their outlook is utterly different from that of the religious texts. They acquaint us with the virtues and vices of the aristocratic classes of the Aryan society and have not much to say about the priestly, mercantile or menial classes, except when they come in contact with the princely section of the population.

Aristocratic life.

The *Mahābhārata* and more particularly the *Rāmāyana* are full of sweet homely scenes of the respect of the son towards his father, the love of the husband and the wife and the attachment of the brothers towards one another. Fulfilment of promises and adherence to truth whatever be the consequences, and an undaunted chivalry appear to have been a feature in

the character of the Kṣhatriyas. Great emphasis was laid on the early training of the princes under tutors, in which archery and other physical exercises predominated. It was cowardice to refuse to accept the challenge to a duel and to a game of dice; at the latter the prince could stake anything, even his own person, his wife and his kingdom. Polygamy (or marrying many wives) was considered quite normal for a Kṣhatriya: nearly every prince had a big harem which included the chief queen and other queens and women. The story of the *Rāmāyana* shows how such an important public question as the succession to the throne was decided by the lawful influence of the harem which neither the king nor the people were able to check.

War.

Warfare was almost a pastime with the Kṣhatriyas. The idea of a universal empire 'stretching from sea to sea' was always present before a powerful king, and no pretext was necessary to invade a neighbouring realm. The army consisted of chariots, horses, elephants and the infantry, and fighting was done by means of bows and arrows, missiles and various other weapons. Each army was led by a general, and there were conventional rules to be observed in war: for instance, nobody could hurt one who sought protection. Messengers carrying even the most insulting messages could not be slain. Death on the battle-field was the noblest death that a Kṣhatriya could die. Defeat in war sometimes resulted in the capture and imprisonment of the prince, but usually he had to acknowledge the suzerainty of the victor and was restored to the throne. Powerful princes sometimes performed the *Rājasūya* and *Aśvamedha* sacrifices with great pomp and show.

Kingship was hereditary, but we have instances when, in case of failure of heir, the people chose their own king. In the administration the king was helped by his brothers, ministers and the Brahmana priest attached to the royal court. There are many cases on record in which wicked kings refused to be guided by any counsel and acted according to their own caprice. The influence of the priest too depended on the nature of the king: in the *Rāmāyana* the king is always guided by his priest Vasishtha; but in the *Mahābhārata* the advice of the priest mostly counted for naught, and the autocratic king had his way in everything. The people both of the city and the country (*paura* and *janapada*) appeared on the scene every now and then, *e.g.*, to acknowledge a new king, to approve of an important royal act, or to place their grievances before the king; but there was no definite organization of the people through which they could express their wishes.

Administration.

The epics, as has been said above, dea with royal courts and affairs, and it is only incidentally that we are told of other sections of the population. We hear of numerous sages leading a retired life in their hermitages in forests. The caste-system was fully known at the time with which the epics deal. The Brahmanas claimed superiority over the Kshatriyas and acted as advisers to the king, as we find in the *Rāmāyana;* but in many cases they had little voice in matters of state. They expected gifts of cows, land, etc., from the king and were fed in large numbers on festive occasions. Merchants and artisans, compositely called the Vaisyas, formed themselves into guilds (*śreṇi*) according to the wares they

Caste.

dealt with, and rich *seths* (*śreṣthin*) had an important position in the royal court. Noblemen had a retinue of servants and slaves, who no doubt mostly belonged to the Sūdra caste. Besides these there were wild tribes living in areas where Aryan influence had not penetrated.

As has been said above, nearly every prince led a polygamous life. Kṣhatriya girls were seldom married away early, and in many cases chose their husbands in an open assembly of suitors (*Svayamvara*). The royal palace contained separate apartments for the queens, though they did not always observe strict *purdah*. The morality of the princes was not always above reproach and they are, sometimes, seen having recourse to intrigue and finesse.

Women.

Morality.

C. The Jātakas

The *Jātakas*, which form part of the Buddhist *Tripitaka*, pretend to give the accounts of some of the lives which Buddha had lived before he attained Buddhahood in his final life as Siddhartha. In reality, however, they are merely folk-lore and popular stories, which have been forcibly given a Buddhistic air and made to suit Buddhist doctrines. Though they were not written down till the second or first century B.C. as folk-lore they are of much greater antiquity and are all the more interesting in view of the fact that some of them obtained great currency and found a place in the folk-lore literature of Europe.

Folk-lore.

Caste.

The Jātakas reveal the fact that though Buddha was no admirer of the caste-system, Buddhism failed to extirpate it even from the Buddhist society. The Buddhists quarrelled not with the established social order, but only with the supremacy of the Brahmanas. For this reason, and also because their master was a Kṣhatriya, the Buddhists always began their list of the four castes with the Kṣhatriyas at the top. Their sketch of the Brahmaṇas

The Brahmanas.

is very different from that of the Brahmanical texts: they are represented as greedy, and mean, making no discrimination in the choice of a profession. But for the true Brahmana ascetics who approached the ideals of the Buddhist monks, the Jātakas are all respect. They have been thus described: 'without land, without relations, unconcerned with the sensuous world, free from desires, immune from bad lusts, indifferent to existence; the Brahmanas attain peace of mind; for this reason one calls them virtuous.'

The Kṣhatriyas.

The Kṣhatriyas are always exalted above the Brahmanas as if in reply to priestly literature. 'Even when a Kṣhatriya has fallen into the lowest depths, he is still the best, and the Brahmanas are low.' They were proud of their noble birth and would not allow any impurity to enter their blood.

The Vaisyas.

The Vaisyas, or Grihapatis as they are mostly called, are represented as following many professions, such as trade, agriculture and cattle-rearing. Industry was localised to a great extent and sometimes whole villages were inhabited solely by members of one profession. The *Seths* were

honoured even by kings on account of their immense riches and had an important position in royal courts.

The Sūdras. The Sūdras acted as household servants, as well as followers of casteless professions, such as music dancing, jugglery, etc. The outcasts of the society, the Chandalas, were treated with contempt even by the Buddhists.

Marriage within the caste was the usual rule, but there were often deviations. The touch of the lowcaste people was believed to make the food impure. A son usually took up the calling of the father, though there are many instances to the contrary. It seems, therefore, that all the features of the caste-system were fully known, but the rules were not always strictly followed in actual life.

Trade. A brisk trade was carried on within the country: we constantly hear of merchants going from one place to another with loads of merchandise. There were trade routes all over the country, joining the important trade centres. Indian merchants traded even with foreign lands, such as Suvarnabhūmi (Burma), Ceylon and Baleru (Babylonia). A port of great importance on the western coast was Bhrigu-kachchha (modern Broach). Coins were in use, though transactions were often carried on by barter. There were coins of gold, silver and copper of various denominations, which went by the names of *nishka, suvarṇa* and *kārshāpaṇa.* It seems that important guilds had mints of their own and issued coins marked with their own signs. The earliest coins of India are known as 'puncha-marked coins': a piece of metal was made into a sheet, which was then cut into pieces of square, round or other shapes, and various

marks were printed on them by means of punchas. Puncha-marked coins of copper and silver have been found in large numbers all over India.

Education.

Education was mostly confined to the upper classes. Takṣhasilā (Taxila in the Rawalpindi district) and Vārāṇasī (Benares) are always mentioned as great centres of learning and the homes of renowned teachers. A student could be attached to a teacher in two ways; he could either pay the teacher's fees or render service to his teacher and get education from him in return.

Government.

The government was carried on by the king helped by his priest, ministers and officers. The king lived in a 'goodly pomp' and acted as a thorough autocrat. But sometimes a wicked king was deposed by the ministers and the people, and a new king of their choice was set up. Though there were judicial officers, the king sometimes tried cases himself and inflicted heavy punishments according to his whim. The land belonged to the people, who paid taxes and tithes to the king in kind and cash.

The Three traditions.

Above are given in brief the social conditions of India depicted in three different types of literature, representing the points of view of the Brahmanas, Kṣhatriyas and the Buddhists respectively. They may be very roughly taken to be compositions of the same age, but they are based on older traditions, so that they reflect not only the conditions of the time of their composition but also of the centuries preceding it. It is natural that as the interests of the Brahmanas, Kṣhatriyas and Vaisyas were not identical, and sometimes even conflicting, there should be some difference

in their outlook on life and society. A co-ordination of all these sources alone can give us a true picture of the society. Even then the picture can at best be partial, as there are no texts representing the points of view of the lower classes of society.

It is interesting to note how far Aryan colonization of India had progressed by this period. The most favoured region of the Brahmana law-givers was North India (the extreme west-east excluded), more particularly the Jamuna-Ganges Doab. Beyond that the land was declared to be impure and unworthy of human (*i.e.*, Aryan) habitation. The Jātakas, on the other hand, are mainly concerned with the kingdom of Kaśi, Kosala and Magadha; though places further west and south are sometimes referred to, it is the scene of Buddha's life and activities that interested the Buddhists most.

Geography.

In the war of the *Mahābhārata* every king of India from the north-west to the extreme east and south as far as the Narmada took part; the kings of the centre mostly singing with the sons of Pandu and those of the extremities with the Kurus. The horizon of the *Rāmāyana* is narrower, probably because its story deals with an earlier period. Hardly any knowledge of the Deccan is shown, and mention is made only of some isolated hermitages of ascetics amidst deep forests.

The story of the *Rāmāyana* is often taken to embody the fact of the Aryan penetration to the south, backed by military force. But this hardly seems to have been the intention of the author.

CHAPTER VII

THE PRE-MAURYAN AGE

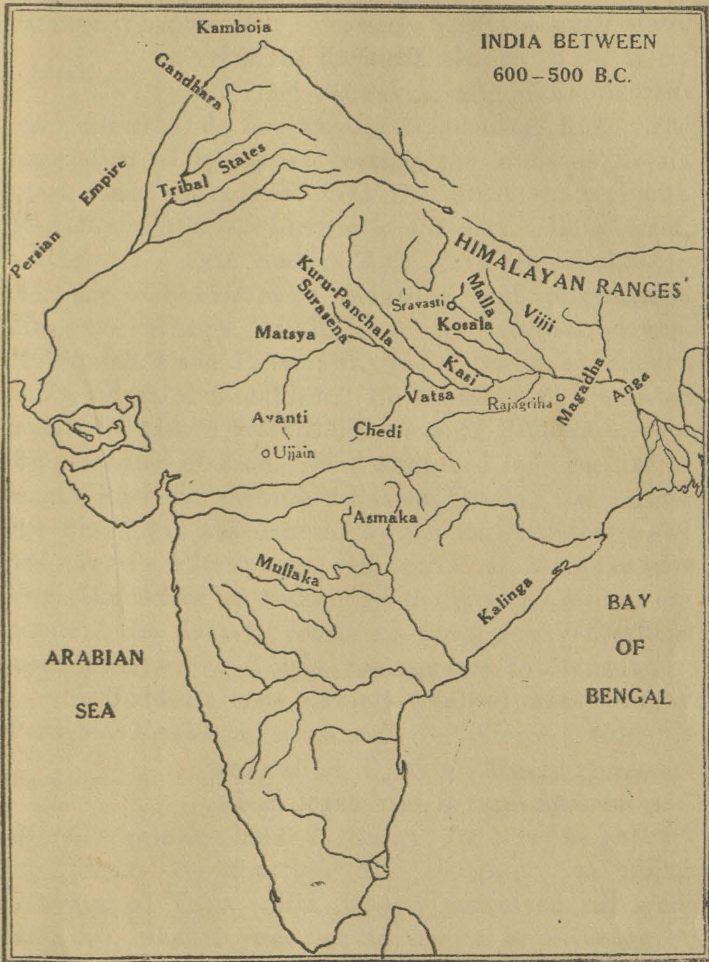
A. Ascendancy of Magadha

Sometime before Buddha's birth, there were Sixteen States (*Mahajanapada*) in India.[1] In the list of these states preserved in the *Aṅguthara Nikāya*, a Buddhist text, there is no mention of Bengal or of any place south of the Godāvarī; this shows that the east and south were not yet recognized as Aryan States. The important states perpetually fought with one another, till the weaker ones were engulfed in the bigger, and when Buddha began his preaching, only four big states held the centre of India: Kosala, Avantī, Vatsa and Magadha.

The Sixteen States.

The four States.

[1] There were: (1) Kāśī (Benares), capital Vārāṇasī; (2) Kusala (Oudh), capitals Sāketa (Ayodhya) and Śrāvastī (Seṭ-Maheṭh in Gonda district, U.P.); (3) Anga (Bhagalpur), capital Champā, situated on the Ganges; (4) Magadha (South Bihar), capital Girivraja-Rājagṛiha (Rajgir near Bihar Town, Bihar); (5) Vṛiji (Darbhanga and Muzaffarpur districts, Bihar), capitals Mithila Janakpur (on the border of Nepal), Vaiśāli (Basarh in Muzaffarpur district), etc., (6) Malla (Gorakhpur, U. P., and adjoining area), capitals Kusenagara (Kasia in Gorakhpur) and Pāvā (identification doubtful); (7) Chedi (Bundelkhand, C.I.), capital Śuktimatī (probably near Bāndā, U. P.); (8) Vatsa (Allahabad area), capital Kausambī (Kosam near Allahabad); (9) Kuru (Delhi area), capital Indraprastha (Indarpat near Delhi); (10) Pānchāla (Northern Doab), capitals Ahichchhatra (Ramnagar, near Bareilly, U. P.) and Kāmpilya (near Farrukhabad, U. P.); (11) Matsya (Jaipur State), capital Virāta (Vairat near Jaipur); (12) Sūrasena (Mathura area), capital Mathura (U. P.); (13) Aśmaka (Godāvarī valley), capital Paudanya (unidentified); (14) Avanti (Malwa),



INDIA BETWEEN
600 – 500 B.C.
Kamboja
Gandhara
Tribal States
Persian Empire
HIMALAYAN RANGES
Kuru-Panchala
Surasena
Matsya
Sravasti
Malla
Kosala
Vijji
Kasi
Vatsa
Rajagriha
Magadha
Anga
Avanti
Ujjain
Chedi
Asmaka
Mullaka
Kalinga
ARABIAN
SEA
BAY
OF
BENGAL

Kosala.

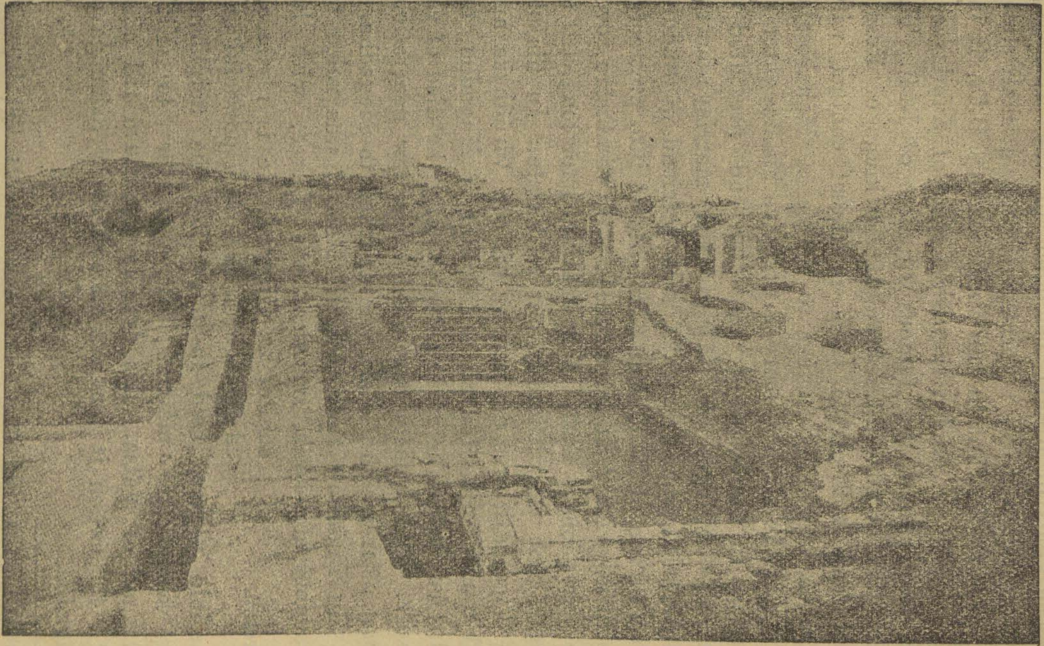
The kings of Kosala belonged to the Ikṣhvākū dynasty (Chapter IV). Formerly it was a small state, but in the sixth century B.C., it included the Śākya state of Kapilavastu (see below) and the famous kingdom of Kāśī. The annexation of the latter brought the kings of Kosala great fame and placed them in direct contact with Magadha which lay further to the east. Mahakosala, a king of the sixth century B.C., gave his daughter in marriage to Bimbisāra of Magadha and presented to him some villages of Kāśī as the marriage-dowry. Mahakosala's son Prasenajit, was a friend of Buddha and a patron of Buddhism. He entered into protracted hostilities with Ajātaśatru, the son of Bimbisāra, over the possession of Kāśī. War continued for long, till at length Kāśī was definitely lost to Kosala. In his old age Prasenajit was deposed by his son Virūdhaka and fled towards Pātaliputra, the capital of Magadha, for help; but before he could enter the city, he died of exposure. His dynasty continued for a few generations more, after which Kosala was annexed to Magadha.

Avanti.

In Buddha's time, Avanti (Malwa) was ruled by Pradyota Mahāsena, surnamed the Fierce, with his capital at Ujjayini. He is represented in legends as a very powerful and irascible prince, held in terror by the neighbouring kings. He married his daughter to King Udayana of Vatsa. His dynasty continued till *circa* B.C. 400, when it was put an end to by Śiśunāga of Magadha.

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capital Ujjayini (Ujjain in the Gwalior State); (15) Gandhāra (N.-W.F.P.), capital Takṣhaśilā (Taxila near Rawalpindi); (16) Kāmboja, capital Rājapura (identity doubtful in both cases.).



Ruins discovered at Mohenjo-daro.

Vatsa.

Vatsa or the Allahabad region was held by the descendants of the Pāndavas (see Chapter IV) with their capital at Kausambi near Allahabad. The contemporary of Buddha in this dynasty was Udayana, famous in Indian literature as the hero of many stories. It is said that Pradyota of Avanti captured him in a hunting expedition and forced him to marry his daughter Vāsavadattā. Udayana was not ill-disposed towards Buddhism, though Buddha visited his kingdom only rarely. Some generations after him, Vatsa passed into the hands of the rulers of Magadha.

Magadha: Bimbisāra.

Bimbisāra came to the throne of Magadha at an early age in *c.* B.C. 543. From his capital at Girivraja, he conquered the kingdom of Anga and got a portion of Kāśī as dowry from the king of Kosala. He was friendly towards Buddha and Mahāvīra; in fact, both the Buddhists and the Jainas claim him as a convert to their respective creeds. He was probably deposed by his son Ajātaśatru (*c.* B.C. 491—459), in the eighth year of whose reign Buddha died. Ajātaśatru finally snatched away Kāśī from Prasenajit of Kosala and annexed the Lichchavi principality of North Bihar. He was hostile to Buddha in the early years of his reign, but later on felt repentant for his cruel treatment of his father and took recourse to Buddha.

Ajātaśatru.

Pātaliputra.

Ajātaśatru fortified a village at the confluence of the Ganges and the Sone. This site came to be known as Pātaliputra (modern Patna), which was destined to be the imperial capital of India for many centuries. Udayin (*c.* B.C. 459—413),

the son and successor of Ajātaśatru, shifted his capital from Girivraja to Pātaliputra.

Śiśunāga.

In *c.* B.C. 411, the throne of Magadha was usurped by Śiśunāga, the governor of Kāśī. He seems to have been a powerful king, for he annexed the kingdom of Avanti, which was at that time ruled over by the fifth descendant of Mahāsena. After him came his son Kālāśoka-Kākavarṇa (*c.* B.C. 393—365), in whose reign the second Buddhist Council is said to have been held at Vaiśālī. He was tragically murdered, and was succeeded by his ten sons (*c.* B.C. 365—343), the most important of whom was Nandivardhana.

The Nandas.

About B.C. 343, the line of Śiśunāga was supplanted by the Nandas. The circumstances of this *coup d'état* are not clear, but it appears that it was the result of a court intrigue which brought Ugrasena-Mahāpadma, a man of low origin—probably a barber—to the throne. He and his eight sons, together known as the Nine Nandas, ruled for 22 years (*c.* B.C. 343—321). They were very powerful rulers, universally feared and hated, and amassed enormous wealth in the exchequer. Under them the empire of Magadha extended far and wide over the whole of Northern India except the Punjab and probably Bengal, and seems to have included parts of the South as well. The dynasty was extirpated by Chandragupta Maurya with the help of the wily Brahmana Kautalya who had a personal grudge against the Nandas.

Rise Magadha.

We thus find that in the centuries after Buddha the political power in Northern India gradually centred round one kingdom, Magadha. The four great states that existed in

Buddha's time were conquered one by one by the powerful rulers of Magadha beginning with Bimbisāra, till at length, under the Nandas, Magadha became an all-India power.

Chronology.

The scheme of chronology followed here requires a word of explanation. The main sources of information for the dynasties of Bimbisāra and Śiśunāga are the Puranas and the Ceylonese chronicles of Buddhism, called the *Dīpavamsa* and the *Mahāvamsa*. The Puranas differ from one another in many essentials; moreover, taken singly, they are often self-contradictory. One instance may be given here: we are told that Śiśunāga founded a dynasty, the sixth king of which was Bimbisāra. But in the same breath we are also told that the descendants of Pradyota-Mahāsena of Avanti (who, we know from the Buddhist scriptures, was a contemporary of Buddha and Bimbisāra) were ousted by that very Śiśunāga. For this and many other cogent reasons we have to conclude that the dynasty of Bimbisāra preceded, and not followed, that of Śiśunāga.

It seems, therefore, that the true history of the period has been better preserved in the Ceylonese chronicles, which have been followed above. The reign-periods ascribed to each king in these lists give the total of 222 years. Buddha is said to have died in the eighth year of Ajātaśatru's reign; if we calculate on this basis, both backwards and forwards, we get *c.* B.C. 491 for the accession of Ajātaśatru (Buddha's death having most probably taken place in B.C. 483), B.C. 543 for that of Bimbisāra, and B.C. 321 for the end of the Nandas. However, though the scheme works out more satisfactorily than that of the Puranas, it is possible that

here, too, there may have been a discrepancy of a few years, so that the end of the Nanda dynasty might have taken place a few years earlier or later. A satisfactory undoing of this tangled web is not possible in the present state of our knowledge of the period.

B. Non-Monarchical States

The Buddhist texts acquaint us with the existence of some self-governing clans which were not ruled over by single kings but by groups of governors. Each state had an assembly-hall, where the people assembled every now and then to discuss public matters. It seems that when there was a division, the will of the majority prevailed. Beyond that we have no sure knowledge of the procedure followed in the clan meetings. It is impossible that all the members of the clan should have assembled at every meeting; but there is no evidence of the system of elected representatives having been known. The executive was formed by the noblemen of the clan, with one chief at the head. It is probable that the chiefship was hereditary. For these reasons it appears that the non-monarchical states were more of the nature of oligarchies than of republics, as some writers have called them.

Oligarchies

These states flourished in the Punjab and the submontane regions of Bihar and of the United Provinces. The most important of them was that of the Vrijis (mentioned above in the list of the Sixteen States), composed of several clans, the chief of them being the Lichchhavis of Vaiśālī. After they had been conquered by Ajātaśatru, they continued to owe allegiance to the Magadhan throne.

The Lichchhavis.

The Śākya clan, of which Buddha was a scion, had more than one stronghold in the Tarai. The chief of these were the Śākyas of Kapilavastu (probably Piprawa, Gorakhpur, U.P.), who owned the suzerainty of the kings of Kosala. There were many other autonomous states at this age, but mention may be made only of the Mallas, who held some place in the Gorakhpur district with their capitals at Kushīnagara (Kasia) and Pāvā (identification doubtful), and the Mauryas of Pipphalivana (to the west of Kushīnagara).

The Śākyas.

The Mallas.

The Mauryas.

C. The Invasion of Alexander

From very early times the Persians kept themselves in touch with their Indian neighbours with whom they had been one before the Indo-Aryans had come to the Punjab. India and the Hindus owe their names to the Persian form of the river-name, Sindhu.[2]

Connection with Persia.

In the middle of the sixth century B.C. Kurush or Cyrus established the great Archaemenian Empire in Persia. He carried on campaigns in the north-west frontier of India and gained some success there. Dārayavaush or Darius I, the third emperor, included in his empire the province of Gāndhāra, the chief town of which was Taxila, and the Indus Valley. In or about B.C. 516 he sent a naval expedition under Skylax to investigate into the course

Darius.

2 The Persians pronounced the word as 'Hindu.' The Greeks adopted this form and popularized it in Europe.

of the Indus. The next king, Khshayārshā or Xerxes, maintained the Indian province, but under his successors the Persian hold grew feebler.

Alexander the Great.

The next important invasion of the north-west was under Alexander the Great, the king of Makedonia (also Macedonia) in Greece. Born in B.C. 356 and educated under Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher, he came to the throne at the age of twenty, after the murder of his father Philip by an assassin. Two years later, in B.C. 334, he started on his victorious campaigns in Asia at the young age of twenty-two. After passing through Asia Minor he reached Syria and Phoenicia in 332. Tyros, the city of Phoenicia, held out for seven months, but the Greeks at length entered the city, and massacred its inhabitants and sold 30,000 of them as slaves (332). Alexander then proceeded to Egypt, conquered it and founded the city of Alexandria on the Mediterranean coast.

Campaign in Asia.

The Greeks then turned to the east again. They crossed the Tigris in September, 331 and came face to face with Darius III, the Archaemenian Emperor. Victory was gained with little trouble and Darius took to his heels. Persepolis, the chief city of Persia, was ruthlessly destroyed and the palace was set on fire.

Hindukush.

From Persia Alexander proceeded towards Bactria in the north. After reducing Bactria and many other kingdoms to subjection, the Greeks crossed the Hindukush in the summer of B.C. 327. The mountainous states, of which the chief was Aśmaka, situated to the east of the Parjkora

river, were conquered one by one. The capital of Aśmaka, called Massaga by the Greeks, had a strong fortification, but it fell after nineteen days. Seven thousand Indian soldiers were enlisted here for assistance in the coming Indian campaign. But the mercenaries were unwilling to help the foreigners in the subjugation of their own country and tried to get out of the clutches of Alexander by night. Alexander, becoming aware of their intentions, fell upon them. Caught unawares the Massagans offered a hard resistance, but they were no match for the vast army of Alexander and fell fighting along with their women.

Massaga.

From Massaga Alexander proceeded through forest tracts and reached the Indus in January, B.C. 326. At or near the place where the modern town of Attock stands, a bridge was constructed, but before the river was crossed, Ambhī, the king of Taxila (between the Indus and the Jhelum), sent word to Alexander offering submission. When Alexander reached Taxila, Ambhī recognized him as his overlord and helped him with money.

The Indus.

The behaviour of Ambhī led Alexander to anticipate the easiness of the task before him. So he sent a message to the ruler of the land between the Jhelum (Greek Hydaspes) and the Chenab (Akesines) asking him to do homage to the victor. But Puru (Greek Poros) who held the Jhelum-Chenab Doab at that time, sent the proud reply that he was coming to meet Alexander at the head of an army. Alexander arrived on the bank of the Jhelum in May

The Jhelum.

Puru.

326, and found Puru waiting on the opposite bank to encounter him. The Greeks remained there encamped for some time and early in July of the same year, when the river was in high floods, they stole a night march to a place sixteen miles up the river and then crossed it, thus eluding the watch of the Indians. The battle of the Hydaspes began. The Indian infantry fought with swords, javelins and bows five to six feet high and arrows about three yards long. The archers were noted for their aim, and neither the shield nor the breast-plate could check an arrow from piercing into the body. Besides the infantry there were elephants, horses and chariots, but these were of no avail. Fighting continued for a whole day, and the Indians fared badly; 3000 horsemen and 12000 foot-soldiers fell fighting, and 10000 more were taken prisoners. Puru himself received nine wounds on his body and fell down unconscious, when the enemies imprisoned him. He was brought before Alexander, a tall and majestic figure, and told him that he wanted to be treated as a king. Alexander was pleased at the manner of the Indian king and returned to him his territory with some augmentation. The defeat of Puru brought Alexander the submission of some neighbouring chiefs as well.

The Chenab and Ravi.

The Greeks crossed the Chenab (Akesines) and the Rāvī (Hydrastes) without much trouble and now faced some petty tribal states, the chief of which the Greeks called Kathaioi, the Indian name probably being Katha. Their stout defence of their stronghold roused the anger of Alexander, who razed the fortifications to the ground.

In September 326 the Greeks reached the Beas (Hyphasis) when they heard reports of the vast army of the Nanda king of Magadha. The soldiers were now thoroughly tired out and dispirited and refused to advance any more. A stirring address from Alexander promising them fame and wealth failed to evoke any enthusiasm among them, and Alexander unwillingly decided to retreat Twelve altars, each fifty cubits high, were erected to mark the farthest point of his advance.

The Beas.

On his way back Alexander defeated the Sibis and other tribes, whose homes cannot be properly located on account of the changes in the courses of rivers. Further south he met the Mālavas, who held both banks of the Lower Ravi and tried to effect an alliance with the Kṣhudrakas who had settled between the Ravi and the Beas. But before the allies could take concerted action, Alexander fell upon the unprepared men and slew many thousands of them.

Retreat.

Down the Indus and in Sind Alexander met and defeated many states, such as principalities of Monsikenos, Oxykanos and Samboo and reached the city of Patala on the Indus Delta. From here a portion of the army proceeded by the sea to the west, while Alexander himself proceeded through Gedrosia (Beluchistan) and reached Sūsā in Persia by May 324. In June 323, he died at Babylon, leaving his empire 'to the strongest.'

Sind.

Alexander's stay in India proper east of the Indus lasted for nineteen months, *viz.*, from March 326 to September 325. He left the Punjab in charge of Puru and Ambhī and

Indian Empire.

Sind under a Greek Peithon. But the Greek occupation of India lasted at the most for two years.

Achievement.

Alexander was a great general and the most prominent figure in Greek history. No amount of danger daunted him and no task was too hard for him. In Europe his name has been ever remembered, but in India, where his empire was the least permanent, he was altogether forgotten. Persia long remembered him as the destroyer of their sacred texts in the conflagration of the Persepolis.

In Western and Central Asia his conquests had far-reaching effects. Greek dynasties continued there for a long tim to come and considerably affected the course of history. But the case of India was different, as a native empire sprang upon the ruins of the Greek territories in no time, and gave Greek culture no opportunity to penetrate into the soil of India. Whatever Greek elements there are in Indian culture must be traced to later sources. But the invasion of Alexander unified the states of the Punjab and made the task easier for Chandragupta, the future emperor of India.

Alexander always attempted to colonize the conquered areas by establishing cities at important sites and making his followers settle therein. In India proper he left three such cities, Boukephala, whence the Greeks started to cross the Jhelum, Nikaia, where the battle with Puru was fought and Alexandria in Sind; these were the only tangible results of the Macedonian invasion.

So far as the Indian campaign is concerned, Alexander's military achievements were not very brilliant, as he tested his steel only with petty rulers

and tribes of the Punjab, torn asunder by internecine disputes and with no inclination to unite against the common foe. Even then the defeat of Puru was not an altogether easy task for the Greeks. It depressed the spirits of the army to such an extent that they did not want to prolong their stay in India.

Alexander was always dreaming of a world-empire and burning with a zeal to outdo the exploits of the mythical Herakles and Dionysus. He was friendly and magnanimous towards those who submitted without war. But a belief in his divine origin made him conceited and haughty. His stay in India was as full of incidents of plunder, massacre and incendiarism as that of any other subsequent invader. To an unbiassed observer it is only one of the grim episodes, unfortunately of so frequent occurrence, in Indian history.

Classical accounts of India.

The invasion of Alexander increased the geographical and historical curiosity of the Greeks about the East. Alexander himself was interested in these facts and encouraged his followers to record what they heard about India and her people. These accounts, as well as those of Megasthenes in the next generation, were relied upon by all the Greek and Latin authors writing about the East. They are of some help in the reconstruction of Indian history.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAURYAS

A. Chandragupta and Bindusāra

Alexander, as we saw before, died in B.C. 323 at Babylon. His huge empire, built up by sheer force of arms and bound together by no bonds of unity, shared the fate of all other military empires, and his death was the signal for its dismemberment. Finally in B.C. 321, his empire, west of the Indus, was partitioned among his generals. This clearly shows that his conquests east of the Indus had already fallen into other hands, as the Greeks were too weak to return them.

Accession to power.

The snatching away of the Punjab from the Greeks must be ascribed to Chandragupta Maurya, who was then a young man. With an army composed of foreigners and Indians, he seems to have started by conquering the Punjab. With the Punjab as his base, Chandragupta proceeded to Magadha and overthrew the Nand king reigning there. The Nandas were renowned for the strength of their army so the encounter must have been a bloody one. But they were utterly annihilated, and Chandragupta became the emperor of Magadha with Pāṭaliputra as his capital. The date of the conquest of Magadha is all but certain

and ranges from B.C. 325 to 313, according to different scholars. We may take *c.* B.C. 320 as a convenient date, but it must be remembered that it is purely tentative.

The popular tradition that Chandragupta was the son of Nanda and Murā, a low-caste woman, has now been discredited. The Buddhist chronicles call him a scion of the Mauryas, the noble Kṣhatriya clan of Pipphalivana, claiming kinship with Buddha. It is not improbable that a Nanda king had married a Maurya princess and that Chandragupta was the son of this marriage.

It may be that Chandragupta had some grudge against the Nandas; so he went to the Punjab to meet Alexander. But the latter was offended at the boldness of his speech and ordered his execution. Chandragupta fled from the Greek camp, and when Alexander departed from India, he took his revenge upon the Greeks and effectively checked any further Greek invasions for a long time to come.

Kautalya.

In all his plans against Magadha, Chandragupta was helped and guided by Chāṇakya or Kautalya (also Kautilya), a wily and masterful Brahmana. It is said that he wrote a treatise called the *Arthaśāstra*, on politics and statecraft, for the guidance of the young prince whom he had placed on the Magadhan throne.

The *Mudrārākṣhasa*.

The *Mudrārākṣhasa*, a historical drama composed by Viśākhadatta several centuries later, preserves the story of the Magadhan revolution. Intrigues by the party of the Nanda king, counter-intrigues by Chāṇakya, ending finally in the reconciliation of Rākshasa, the loyal

Nanda minister, with Chandragupta and the retirement of Chāṇakya from the political arena—this is the subject-matter of the interesting drama.

Empire.

The ambitions of Chandragupta did not rest content with the Punjab and Magadha alone. With a vast army of about 700,000 men he extended his empire far and wide and finally included in it the whole of Northern India. There is some evidence to show that he penetrated far into the south, but the southern limit of the empire cannot be accurately determined.

Seleukos.

Of the Greek generals who took to fighting with one another after the death of Alexander, Seleukos (who assumed the title 'Nikator', the conqueror) emerged supreme by B.C. 312, with an empire extending from Syria to Bactria. He aspired to emulate the feats of Alexander, and in or about B.C. 305, crossed the Indus and encountered Chandragupta. The Greek historians are silent on the results of the engagement, but from the terms of the treaty that terminated the hostilities, it appears that Seleukos could not score a point over the Indian monarch. Chandragupta presented to Seleukos five hundred elephants and received in exchange all the land from Herat to Beluchistan. It is possible that the alliance was cemented by the marriage of Chandragupta with a daughter of Seleukos. The Indian emperor also received Megasthenes as Seleukos' envoy to his court. Megasthenes wrote a book named *Indika* which records the facts that he gathered during his stay at Pātaliputra.

No other noteworthy event of Chandragupta's reign is recorded. He ruled his vast empire for

twenty-four years with an iron hand, and the crown passed on to his son Bindusāra in c. B.C. 296. According to a Jaina tradition, Chandragupta was a Jaina; in his old age he retired with Bhadrabāhu, the Jaina leader (see Chapter V), to the hills of Mysore and, after the Jaina custom, starved himself to death.

Abdication.

Chandragupta's reign marks a definite epoch in Indian history. The centripetal forces which had been operating in India since the days of Bimbisāra now culminated in the absorption of all the states of Northern and some of Scuthern India in the empire of Magadha. In the North-West, India now extended much beyond her natural limits. The Greeks did not think of sending any more expeditions for a century to come and thought it expedient to maintain friendly relations with the Indian emperors.

Achievements.

Chandragupta reigned for twenty-four years and was succeeded by his son Bindusāra known to the Greeks by his other name Amitrakhāda or Amitraghāta. He seems to have been able to hold Chandragupta's empire intact, though in the latter years of his reign there was probably a general revolt in the empire. Bindusāra maintained amicable relations with the Greek princes of Western Asia and Egypt. The personal correspondence between Antiochos of Syria and Bindusāra is interesting. Bindusāra asked for some figs, raisin, wine and a Greek philosopher from Antiochos. The latter sent the figs, and the wine, but regretted that Greek law did not allow the selling of a philosopher. Bindusāra had a reign of twenty-five years and died in c. B.C. 271.

Bindusāra.

B. Megasthenes

Our knowledge of the administration of Chandragupta is usually derived from two different sources, the accounts of Megasthenes, Seleukos' envoy to the Pātaliputra court and the *Arthaśāstra* of Kautalya. But both these sources have their defects. The *Indikā* of Megasthenes has not been preserved in the original and is accessible to us only through quotations found in the writings of later Greek and Latin writers. These writers would hardly quote a passage correctly and never let a passage go without their own comments and embellishments thereon. There is, therefore, every reason to think that all that is given by them in the name of Megasthenes is not from his pen at all. Moreover, all the classical accounts are full of generalizations, and the custom of one province has sometimes been ascribed to the whole of India. And all of them, perhaps not even Megasthenes excepted, were too fond of credulous stories and "travellers' tales;" indeed, no amount of the marvellous was incredible to them. But in matters that came under the personal observation of Megasthenes, he may be taken as a fairly safe guide.

The *Indikā*.

Pātaliputra, situated at the confluence of the Ganges and the Sone continued to be the capital of Chandragupta. Megasthenes informs us that the city was about nine miles long and a mile and a half broad, and was surrounded on all sides by a wooden wall, pierced with holes for the discharge of arrows and surmounted with five hundred and seventy towers. It was encompassed all round by a ditch six hundred feet in breadth and thirty cubits in depth,

Capital.

meant for defence and for receiving the sewage of the city.

The officers of the city were divided into six bodies of five members each. The first board had charge of the industrial arts. The second looked after foreigners out of humanitarian, not unmixed with political, motives. The third body formed a permanent census board which maintained a register of all the inhabitants and levied taxes according to the income of each citizen. The fourth board superintended trade and commerce, weights and measures, and the fifth looked after manufactured articles. The sixth collected one-tenth of the prices of the articles sold. In their collective capacity the officers were charged with matters concerning the general welfare, public buildings, markets, etc. Megasthenes confined this account of urban officers to the capital city only. But it is likely that such organization also existed in all the important cities.

Administration :
(a) Urban.

The military officers were similarly divided into six boards of five members each. The first board was appointed to co-operate with the admiral of the fleet, and the second looked after the commissariat. The other four boards were entrusted with the care and upkeep of foot soldiers, horses, war-chariots and elephants.

(b) Military.

Besides these two classes of officers, urban and military, there was a third class, to look after the rural administration, but we know very little about them. Briefly, they were charged with the collection of land-revenue, with irrigation, forests, communications and general supervision.

(c) Rural.

The luxury of the court knew no bounds. The king was always surrounded by women, and wine was freely consumed. Save on extraordinary occasions, the king did not stir out of the palace. But Chandragupta had the usual accessibility for which oriental kings have always been noted. The king personally looked into every detail of the administration; so his daily routine was rather crowded. We are told that he never slept in the daytime and that the hearing of cases occupied him the whole day. He was in constant danger of his life, and to be safe from plotters he even changed couches at night.

Court.

On the whole, India seems to have left a favourable impression on Megasthenes. Though laws were uncodified, crimes were rare and litigation not much. "They have no suits about pledges or deposits......(they) make their deposits and confide to each other. Theii houses and their property they generally leave unguarded." The people loved finery and ornament and "avail themselves of every desire to improve their looks." Contrary to what we know from certain Hindu law-books, Megasthenes emphatically declares that there was no slavery in India.

Society.

The Indian population, according to Megasthenes, was divided into seven classes or groups—the philosophers (Brahmanas and Śrāmanas); husbandmen, neatherds and shepherds; artisans; warriors; overseers; and councillors. This is of extreme interest, showing, as it does, how the Indian caste-system presented itself to a foreigner. It clearly proves that the line of division between the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras was not distinguishably drawn, and that the four-fold division of society was artificial on the very face of it.

The husbandmen formed the bulk of the population and paid a land-tax at the rate of 25 per cent of the produce: Land was inviolable even on occasions of war; if in spite of special attentions crops were inevitably destroyed, peasants received compensation. Irrigation was a subject of special royal care.

Megasthenes records some interesting customs prevailing in the Punjab, such as the selling of marriageable girls, burning of widows etc. He formed a very low opinion about the position of Indian women, who, he said, were excluded from all philosophical discussions by the Brahmanas. This shows that the position of women had undergone a change since the Vedic period.

C. Kautalya

The *Arthaśāstra*.

We now pass on to consider another type of literature from which facts about Mauryan administration and society are usually derived. Kautalya, the minister of Chandragupta, is known to have written an *Arthaśāstra* or a treatise on statecraft for the guidance of the emperor. But whether the present *Arthaśāstra* which was discovered in 1905 is a genuine text of the Maurya period is a point on which scholars differ. The problem has been tackled again and again, and though it is now becoming increasingly probable that the *Arthaśāstra*, as we have it, is really the work of the adviser of Chandragupta, the question cannot be regarded as finally closed. Even assuming the authenticity of the text, we must remember what was said above in connection with the *Dharmasūtras*, viz., that it is a theoretical treatise giving only the maxims of efficient government

as Kautalya conceived it, and we have no knowledge as to how far his instructions were followed by the Mauryas in the day-to-day administration.

According to Kautalya, the king should be assisted by three or four ministers (*Amātya*) in the deliberation of public affairs. Besides these, there was to be a council of ministers (*Mantri-parishad*), whose number must vary with the exigencies of the situation, forming a bigger group of advisers. The two great officials of the State were the *Sannidhātrī* (manager of royal household, exchequer, currency etc.) and *Samahartrī* (collector-general of tolls and taxes). Under them were to work about twenty-five superintendents (*Adhyaksha*), such as Superintendent of Salt, (to collect a tax on both indigenous and imported salt), of gold, forest, commerce, tolls, weaving, agriculture, horses, elephants, chariots, infantry, navy etc. Thus, Kautalya does not differentiate as Megasthenes does, between civil and military officers.

Administration : (a) Centre.

The *Samahartrī* was to divide the country into four divisions, each under a provincial governor (*Sthānika*). The *Sthānika* should divide his province into groups of five or ten villages, each under a "protector" (*Gopa*). Commissioners (*Pradeshtri*) were appointed to supervise the work of the *Sthānikas* and *Gopas*. Each officer was helped by a host of spies.

(b) Provinces.

The city-officer (*Nāgaraka*), like the *Samahartri*, was to place the four-quarters of the city under a *Sthānika*, who in turn was to appoint *Gopas* over ten, twenty or thirty families. The *Gopas* were to maintain a permanent census,

(c) City.

look after foreigners and public buildings, make arrangements against fire, and to effect jail deliveries.

Justice.

There were to be two types of courts, *Dharmastheya* and *Kantaka-sodhana*, very roughly corresponding to the modern civil and criminal courts. The former was to be presided over by three ministers (*Amātya*) or three judicial officers (*Dharmastha*), and the latter by three ministers or three commissioners (*Pradeshtri*). The superintendent of pasture-lands or the officer for detecting thieves (*Chora-rajjaka*) was to give compensation in cases of non-recovery of the stolen article. In both civil and criminal cases the judge was to summon and hear the witnesses.

Nature of Government.

Intense centralization was thus the guiding principle of Kautalya's system. But, as is natural in an age with no means of rapid communication, the extent of central interference with the provincial governments must have depended on the personal qualities and vigilance of the ruler.

But the administration was indeed extremely severe. Kautalya prescribes capital punishment for petty offences, such as evasion of tolls. As is testified to by Megasthenes, mutilation of hands and legs was a frequent punishment, and every form of judicial torture was resorted to in order to make the prisoner confess his guilt. Espionage formed a huge organization, and had Kautalya's system of appointing spies and counter-spies been really followed, it must have been dangerous to have intimacy with anybody.

In Kautalya's system the state was to guide, control and direct the activities of every individual in all spheres of life. Public amusements and entertainments were to be regulated; immigration and emigration were to be closely watched; the poor, the helpless, the aged and orphans were to receive help; the activities of the guilds of traders and manufacturers were to be observed; care was to be taken that salesmen did not cheat their customers by selling bad articles; irrigation was to be a concern of prime importance; steps were to be taken to prevent such catastrophes as flood, fire, pestilence and locusts; taxes and tolls were to be realized from all possible sources. In short, the government was to be an all-powerful body, kept in intimate touch with everything that happened within its limits.

State activity.

The government was also to look into the relations among the different members of a family. No one could leave the family without making provision for the dependants. Rules were prescribed for divorce, separation, second or subsequent marriages etc.

Kautalya's system of administration was meant for a small state surrounded with other state on all sides. The king is exhorted to try to expand his territories at the cost of his neighbours. No rules of morality or decency were to be observed in the relations between one state and another. Secret agents could resort to treachery, poison and murder at every step.

Inter-statal relation.

The *Arthaśāstra* is a unique text of its kind. Every aspect of government has been thoroughly and systematically dealt with in all its details. It is the product

of age-long thought and devotion to the subject, for the author mentions many teachers and schools of thought preceding him.

D. Aśoka

Antecedents.

Aśoka was not altogether inexperienced in the art of government when he succeeded Bindusāra. During his father's reign he had acted as governor of Central India and Taxila, where he also suppressed a rebellion. According to Buddhist legends his accession to the throne was not peaceful, as he had to kill his brothers to make room for himself; for this reason, his formal coronation was delayed for four years. If the story be believed, Aśoka's coronation may be dated *c.* B.C. 267, even though he might have come to the throne in *c.* B.C. 271. It may be remembered that all these dates are provisional and depend on the initial year of Chandragupta's reign.

Titles.

In his inscriptions Aśoka mostly calls himself by his other name of *Piyadasī* (Sanskrit *Priyadarshin*). Besides this, he bore the honorific *Devānām-priya* ('Beloved of the gods'), a title common to all the kings of that age.

Kalinga.

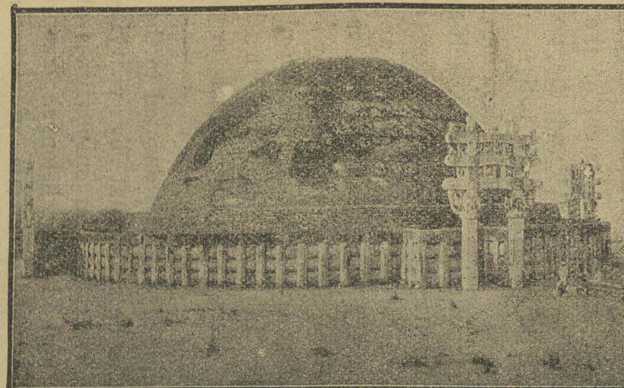
Eight years after the coronation, *i.e.*, in *c.* B.C. 259, Aśoka led an expedition against Kalinga (Orissa). The country was conquered, but at the expense of an enormous number of lives. We are told that one hundred and fifty thousand men were captured, one hundred thousand were slain, and many thousands died. Such great hardships for a kingdom of the size of Kalinga must have told heavily

on the population, and the Emperor was struck with remorse. Some time after this event, Aśoka came under the influence of Buddhist teachers and accepted Buddhism. But for about a year he did not exert himself in the cause of the faith. Then he visited the *Sangha*, and thus began the unique zeal of his life, the love for Buddhism and the desire to spread it. There is, however, a probability that throughout the major part of his life, his attitude towards Buddhism was as friendly as towards any other creed, and that it was only towards the close of his life that he became a convert to Buddhism and lived with the *Sangha*.

Conversion to Buddhism.

Nearly the whole of Aśoka's reign was directed towards one end, *viz.*, the happiness of his subjects and the propagation of *Dharma* among them. The whole machinery of the state was set into activity for this purpose. He gave up the practice of going on pleasure tours and substituted for them tours for *Dharma*. In the course of these tours, he visited the holy places of Buddhism such as the Bodhi tree near Gaya and the Lumbini gardens, the birth-place of Buddha. The Brahmanas and the Buddhist monks received gifts when the Emperor was on such tours; gold was distributed among the old and the village-folk were instructed in *Dharma*. He ordered the high officials of the state to undertake quinquennial tours to preach morality. Later on this business was entrusted to the *Dharma-mahāmātras*, a new class of officers created by the Emperor thirteen years after the coronation. They were instructed to attend to the morals of the people and to preach the moral code among them. He got his royal messages

Propagation of Dharma.



Sanchi Stupa.

to his people inscribed on rocks, pillars and slabs of stone throughout his empire, so that the people could read them and act accordingly.

In many of his inscriptions, Aśoka enumerated what he meant by true *Dharma*. His code of morality is remarkable for its simplicity and clearness—obedience to parents and elders, respect to teachers, proper treatment of the Brahmanas and monks, relatives, servants and the poor, non-violence to animals, toleration of all beliefs, mercy, gift, truthfulness, purity, mildness, moderation in expenditure and in accumulation, gratitude, self-examination etc.,—these constituted the essentials of Aśoka's *Dharma*. The vices that he condemns are as simple: impetuosity, cruelty, anger, pride and malice. His teachings, therefore, had nothing showy or striking about them. They contain some common-place rules of morality found in all religions. In his system there was no place for any ritual or theological orthodoxy.

Moral Code.

A whole edict of Aśoka is devoted to the subject of toleration. There he says that by vilifying another sect, a man only vilifies the sect to which he belongs. People are exhorted to promote the essentials of *Dharma* among themselves and not to indulge in empty religious squabbles. By his own conduct, Aśoka set an example before the people. The Brahmanas received from him the same share of respect and munificence as the Buddhist monks. He presented to the ascetics of the Ājīvaka sect some caves in the Barabar Hills near Gaya. These facts show that Aśoka did not discriminate between one religion and another.

Toleration.



Capital and Inscribed Pillar of Aśoka, Sarnath.

The theory and practice of toleration were not incompatible with Aśoka's ardent zeal for Buddhism. It is not certain whether Aśoka became a Buddhist in the early or later years of his life. But whenever it was, he espoused the cause of Buddhism with unique enthusiasm, and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that he was almost the ecclesiastical head of the Buddhist church. Stories and legends grew up about his relations with Buddhism and some of them are embodied in a book called *Aśokāvadāna,* which forms part of a bigger work called *Divyāvadāna,* composed about the second or third century A.D.

Aśoka as a Buddhist.

It is said that under his patronage the third Buddhist council was held at Pātaliputra. He also despatched missionaries to the various outlying provinces of India as well as to Ceylon and Burma. The Ceylonese mission was headed by Mahendra and Samghamitrā, the son and daughter (or according to another tradition, the brother and sister) of Aśoka. On their way to Ceylon they took with them a branch of the Bodhi tree of Gaya and planted it at Anurādhapura in Ceylon.

That Aśoka acted as the virtual dictator of the Buddhist Church appears from some of his inscriptions as well. In one of them he recommended seven sermons of Buddha for the constant recital and meditation of monks. In another inscription known as the Schism Edict, Aśoka says that any monk who tried to create a breach in the Buddhist church would be made to wear white clothes (which monks should not wear) and would be driven out of the church.

Story runs that in his old age Aśoka nearly exhausted the royal treasury by his liberality towards the

church, so that he had to retire to a monastery as a pauper and the ministers took over charge of the administration.

Public welfare.

Apart from his attempts for the spiritual uplift of the people, Aśoka bestowed upon his subjects a number of boons of a practical nature. Early in his reign, medical hospitals were founded both for men and beasts, and rare medicinal plants were imported from neighbouring countries. By the roads, wells were dug and trees planted at regular intervals. To prevent the people from being maltreated by officials, he impressed upon the latter his desire for paternal government, and appointed *Mahāmātras* to look into their conduct. To impart uniformity to all judicial investigations and punishments within the empire, he gave the *Rājūkas*, a class of high officials, a large measure of autonomy. He granted a respite of three days to criminals condemned to death, so that in the meantime their relations might induce the *Rājūkas* to commute the sentences, or if that was not possible, the prisoners might give alms to the poor and devote their time to meditation to prepare themselves for the next world. The welfare of the people was the object nearest to his heart, and no amount of exertion was too great to him for the promotion of the happiness of the people.

Animals.

Like a true Buddhist, Aśoka bestowed as much care as possible on animals. With men, they were to have an equal share of the benefits of medical treatment in the hospitals. Wells sunk and trees planted on the highways were meant no less for animals than for men. Further, by an imperial order, he prevented altogether the killing



Sānchi Gate.

of certain animals, while the slaughter of others was considerably restricted.

Very early in his reign, Aśoka largely reduced the consumption of meat in the palace. We are told that previously hundreds of thousands of animals were slaughtered every day for curry. But now it was reduced to two peacocks and one deer; and the people were assured that even these would be spared later on.

Personal life.

The immense extension of the activities of the state would have been impossible but for the personal exertions of the king, who rose equal to the occasion. He regretted that for a long period there had been no regular despatch of business and declared that he would do the people's business at all times and at all places. Yet he was not satisfied with his exertions, and was always willing to work harder still for the people.

In his administration the king was assisted by a council (*Parishad*) which conveyed the orders of the Emperor to the *Mahāmātras*, or officers of the state. Of *Mahāmātras* there were many classes,—*Dharma-mahāmātras*, *Stryadhaksha-mahāmātras* (superintendents of women), *Anta-mahāmātras* (wardens of the marches), etc. *Rājūkas* were another class of high officials, entrusted with the administration of justice and probably also with some revenue functions. Provincial governors were probably known as *Prādeśikas* and district officers as *Yuktas*. Judges of towns were called *Nagara-Vyavahārikas*.

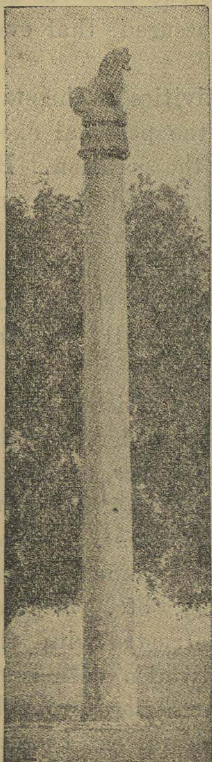
Administration.

There were four viceroyalties—at Taxila, Ujjain, Tosali (modern Dhauli in Orissa) and Suvarṇagiri (in the South, not yet identified), under princes of the

blood royal. Each of them was assisted by a *Parishad.* The princes enjoyed a large degree of independence, and had a number of officers under them.

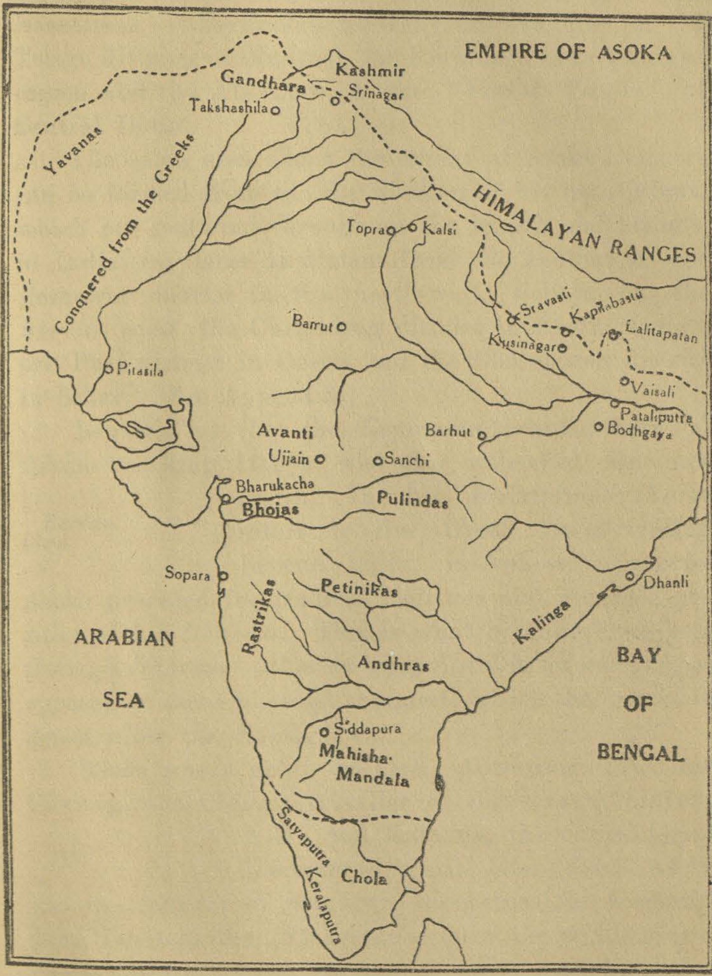
Two of Aśoka's inscriptions refer to the independent kingdoms on the outskirts of his empire, and from this it is possible to get a fair idea of the Maurya empire at its zenith. It is apparent that his western frontier continued the same as it had been in the days of Chandragupta, and included some Greek principalities as well. In the south there were five independent peoples, the Chodas of Trichinopoly, the Pandyas of Madura, the Satyaputras (identification doubtful), the Keralaputras (on the western coast near Cochin) and Tāmraparnī (Ceylon). We may, therefore, reasonably hold that the empire included some portion of Mysore. Thus the Maurya empire extended over an area vaster than that of any other empire of India.

Extent of the empire.



Lauriyanandangarh Pillar.

Besides this, many provinces bordering on the empire proper acknowledged the suzerainty of Aśoka, but enjoyed autonomy. These were the Yavana province (the Greek colony in the north-west frontier), Gāndhāra (with capital at Taxila). Kāmboja (possibly South Kashmir), Nabhāka (probably at the foot of the


EMPIRE OF ASOKA
Kashmir
Gandhara
Srinagar
Takshashila
Yavanas
Conquered from the Greeks
HIMALAYAN RANGES
Topra
Kalsi
Sravasti
Lalitapatan
Kusinagar
Barrut
Pitasila
Vaisali
Pataliputra
Bodhgaya
Avanti
Barhut
Ujjain
Sanchi
Bharukacha
Bhojas
Pulindas
Sopara
Dhanli
Petinikas
Rastrikas
Kalinga
ARABIAN
SEA
Andhras
BAY
OF
BENGAL
Siddapura
Mahisha-
Mandala
Satyaputra
Keralaputra
Chola

Himalayas in the Nepalese Tarai), the Bhojas and Rāshtrikas (of Berar and Konkan), the Andhras (of the Telegu districts of Madras), the Pulindas of the Vindhya region and the Āṭavikas or the 'Forest People' of Central India.

The same idea about the extent of Aśoka's empire can be formed from the distribution of his inscriptions, which are scattered throughout the length and breadth of India, in places as distant from one another as the Peshawar district in the north-west, Sopara on the western coast, the Chitaldrug district in North Mysore, the Puri district in Orissa and the Champaran district in Bihar. (See Appendix.)

Foreign relations.

Legends say that the Ceylonese contemporary of Aśoka was king Tishya, who also welcomed the new creed. In his inscriptions Aśoka refers to five Greek kings[1] ruling beyond India, in whose territories Aśoka provided for medical facilities and preached the rules of his *Dharma*. This is what he calls 'conquest through *Dharma*' (*dharma-vijaya*) which he attained, as opposed to mere physical conquest, which he came to detest after the Kalinga war.

Art.

Aśoka was a great builder. According to Yuan Chwang, the Chinese traveller of the seventh century A.D., and Kalhaṇa, the chronicler of Kashmir of a still later date, Aśoka was the founder of Śrinagar, the capital of Kashmir. Tradition says that Aśoka broke open the eight *stupas*

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1 They are : (1) Antiochus II Theos of Syria, (2) Ptolemy II Philadelphos of Egypt, (3) Antigonus Gonatas of Macedonia, (4) Magas of Cyrene (North Africa), and (5) Alexander either of Epirus or of Corinth (both in Greece).

which had been built to enshrine the different portions of Buddha's body at different places, and himself built 84000 *stupas* distributing the remains among them. Aśoka's palace at Pātaliputra excited the wonder of Fa-Hien (fifth century A.D.), who believed that Aśoka commissioned genii to construct it. Maurya art will always remain famous for the exquisitely polished pillars of Aśoka, of which ten have been found. On their tops were placed the figures of certain animals, bearing a majestic grace. It has been held by many that because the other figures of this century and the following ones were quite crude, the perfectly executed pillars and animal figures must have been the workmanship of foreign artists, Persian or Greek. But whatever be their origin, the capitals of the pillars are among the finest specimens of Indian art. The lifelike bearing of the lions, for instance, found at Sārnāth, the delineation of the muscles and sinews of their legs, the excellent treatment of the mane, and above all their extraordinary accuracy and proportion, cannot but excite the admiration even of the most casual observer.

The columns of Aśoka are forty to fifty feet in height, and are all carved out of the sandstone rocks of Chunar. To transport them to various places, hundreds of miles away, was an engineering feat of the most stupendous kind.

Achievements of Aśoka.

Aśoka was the last prominent ruler of the dynasty which may at once be pronounced to be the greatest in India so far as the extent of territory is concerned. And the personality of Aśoka, unique and unparalleled, added to it a moral lustre, such as has belonged to no other dynasty of India. There has been no other king

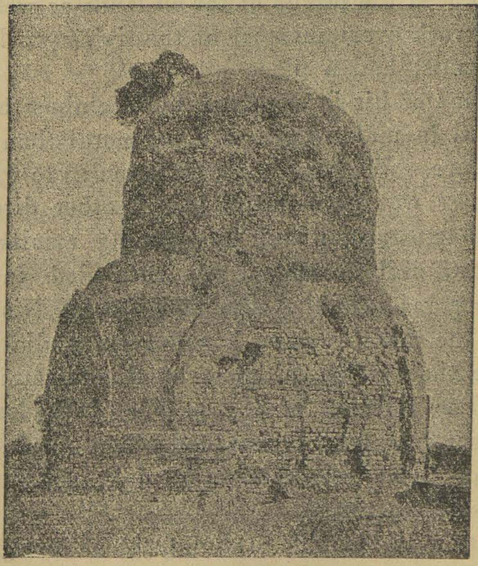
who made the happiness of the people and the propagation of morality among them the sole object of his life, and who lived only to see humanity physically happy and morally elevated. It must be added that his paternal care was not limited to his own subjects, but embraced the people of far-off lands as well. In his plan of work every member of the living world, including animals, had a place.

In one of his inscriptions Aśoka claims that he was successful in making people more moral than they had been before. We have no information as to what extent his success was permanent; but in other directions he achieved substantial and far-reaching results. By his missionary zeal he must have succeeded in drawing many persons into the Buddhist fold. His missions beyond the north-western boundary of India paved the way for the further progress of Buddhism in Central Asia. The religion of the people of Ceylon, whence Buddhism spread to Burma and other places, still bear record of the wide-spread missionary activities of the Buddhist Emperor.

Within the bounds of India, Aśoka's reign marks a stage in the cultural unification of this vast country. The edicts of Aśoka are composed in a standard Prākrit with some variations to suit different localities; and except two versions of the north-west they are all written in the Brahmi script. These facts helped to popularize both the northern dialect and script all over India, with the result that we find that in the subsequent centuries the inscriptions of the south were composed in the dialect and written in the script which properly belonged to Northern India. This was an indirect effect of Mauryan imperialism.

E. Successors of Aśoka

Aśoka died in *c.* B.C. 230 and the historian is once more faced with confusion in chronology. It is not possible to form a list of Aśoka's successors, as the lists of the Puranas themselves widely divergent, have



Sarnath Stupa.

few names in common with the Buddhistic list. The land south of the Narmada declared independence in no time and by B.C. 210 the Punjab passed into other hands. The successors of Aśoka therefore held sway over a considerably attenuated empire.

Daśaratha. Daśaratha, probably Aśoka's grandson, made a grant of some Barbar caves near Gayā to the Ājīvaka ascetics.

Samprati. Samprati, another successor, was a strong supporter of Jainism; the

Jaina texts speak of him as enthusiastically as the Buddhists do of Aśoka.

Bṛihadratha.

The last king of the line was Bṛihadratha, who was deposed by his Brahmana general Pushyamitra, the founder of the Śunga dynasty in *c.* B.C. 183.

Decay of the empire.

Rebellions of the provincial governors, internal dissensions and the absence of a strong hand to wield the sceptre are some of the common causes of the decay of an Indian empire. These factors no doubt operated in the case of the Maurya Empire as well, but some faults must be ascribed to Aśoka himself. Aśoka did not realize the necessity of creating and maintaining a physically strong state. Early in his reign he abjured war and the army must have been greatly reduced. But *Dharma-vijaya* could not hold together the different parts of the empire for long, with the result that it was reduced to a tottering fabric within a short time after Aśoka's death.

APPENDIX

THE INSCRIPTIONS OF AŚOKA

The main sources of information about the history of Aśoka are the Buddhist traditions and his own inscriptions. As the latter are by far the more important, it is desirable to have some idea of their nature.

Classification.

The inscriptions fall under six heads:

(*i*) The fourteen Rock Edicts, found at seven different places, namely, Shahbazgarhi

(Peshawar district, N.-W.F.P.), Nausehra (Hanara district, N.-W.F.P.), Kalsi (Dehra Dun district), Girnar (Kathiawar), Sopara (north of Bombay), Dhauli (Puri district, Orissa) and Jaugada (Ganjam district, Madras).

(*ii*) Two separate Kalinga Edicts, found at Dhauli and Jaugada in place of Edicts XII and XIII, the latter of which mentions Aśoka's conquest of Kalinga.

(*iii*) Two Minor Rock Edicts, found singly or together at Sahasram (Shahabad district, Bihar), Rupanath (Jubbulpore district, C.P.), Bairat (Jaipur, Rajputana), Maski (Hyderabad, Deccan). Palkigundu and Gavinath (Kopbal district, Hyderabad Deccan), Yerragudi (southern border of the Kurnool district, Madras) and Jating-Rameshwar, Siddhapur and Brahmagiri (Chitaldrug district, Mysore).

(*iv*) Seven Pillar Edicts, inscribed on pillars set up at different places, *viz.*, Siwalik Hills, Meerut (both these pillars were brought to Delhi by Firuz Shah), Allahabad, Lauriya Araraj, Lauriya, Nandangarh and Rampurwā (all in Champaran district, Bihar).

(*v*) Minor Pillar Edicts found on five pillars. Of them the inscriptions of Allahabad, Sanchi (near Bhopal, Central India) and Sarnath (near Benares) record Aśoka's Schism Edict: of the other two, the one at

Rummindei (Basti district, U.P.) records Aśoka's visit to the birth-place of Buddha; the other at Nigliva (to the north of the Basti district) records the erection of a *stupa*. A copy of the Rummindei inscription has been found at Kapileshwar near Bhuvaneshwar in Orissa.

(*vi*) The Cave Inscriptions, found on the walls of three caves in the Barbar Hills near Gaya, inform us that the caves were dedicated by Aśoka to some Ājīvaka ascetics.

Script.

All the inscriptions except those at Shahbazgarhi and Nausehra are written in Brahmi, while Kharoshthi, the ancient script of the north-western regions, has been used at Shahbazgarhi and Nausehra.

Language.

The language is Prākrit, the Vernacular speech of these days. The style is vigorous, but not very polished as compared with later Sanskrit prose. The edicts seem to be composed by Aśoka himself and betray his earnestness and sincerity.

CHAPTER IX

AFTER THE MAURYAS

A. NORTHERN INDIA

Pushyamitra, the Brahmana general of the last Maurya king, had been the governor of Vidisā (Besnagar, Gwalior State) before he usurped the throne of Magadha (*c*. B.C. 183). Vidarbha (Berar) had already declared itself independent and the Narmada now formed the boundary of the empire. The Punjab too had passed into different hands.

The Śungas.

During Pushyamitra's reign, a Greek prince penetrated far into India and invested Ayodhya and Madhyamikā (Nagod near Chitor). The identity of the Greek prince is not certain, but it is likely that he was Demetrios of Bactria and not Menander as has been usually held. He was repelled by Vasumitra, the grandson of the emperor. After the incident Pushyamitra performed two *Aśvamedha* sacrifices,[1] presided over by Pātanjali, the famous grammarian. According to Buddhist legends Pushyamitra was a persecutor of Buddhism.

In the reign of Bhāgabhadra, the fifth king of the dynasty, Heliodoros, the ambassador of the Greek king

1 *Aśvamedha* was performed by a king who wanted to attain suzerainty. A horse was let loose and it wandered about at will. Whoever thought of disputing the authority of the sacrifice would catch the horse and thus invite war upon himself. After that the horse was sacrificed, if it came back safe, unimpeded in its course. In practice, however, even petty chiefs sometimes performed the sacrifice without making any large conquests.

of the north-west erected at Besnagar a pillar, the inscription on which shows that Heliodoros, though a Greek, had accepted Bhāgavatism as his religion.

The Kāṇvas.

In *c.* B.C. 70 the Śungas were succeeded by the Kāṇvas, another Brahmaṇa dynasty which continued to rule till *c.* B.C. 26. The extent of their empire is not known, but it must have been very small.

The Mitras.

Coins and inscriptions of kings with names ending in Mitra are found scattered throughout the United Provinces and as far east as Gaya. We may conclude therefore that the whole region was held in the first centuries before and after Christ by kings who might have been related to the Śungas.

Vikramāditya.

Indian tradition cherishes the memory of a king of Malwa, Vikramāditya by name, the hero of numerous legends. He is said to have established the Vikrama era in B.C. 57, which is still current all over Northern India except Bengal. It is probable that such a king did really exist, but there is no definite proof of his existence. He is credited with the ousting of the Śakas from Malwa.

B. Southern India

Khāravela.

About this time Kalinga rose into prominence under Khāravela, a Jaina king. He carried his arms far and wide, invading Mathura and Rajagriha, and defied the authority of the Śātavāhanas who reigned to the west of his empire. The date of Khāravela has been a matter of protracted controversy and it can only be said that he ruled in either

the second or the first century B.C. An inscription in the Hāthigumpha cave (Udayagiri Hills, Orissa) records his achievements.

The Sātavāhanas.

About B.C. 100 (or, according to some, B.C. 200), a Brahmana named Sīmukha carved out a principality for himself in the Deccan with his capital at Pratishthāna (Paithan in the Aurangabad district, Nizam's Dominions) and became the founder of the Śātavāhana dynasty. The limits of his kingdom cannot be accurately stated, but Sātakarni, the third king of the line, is known to have held even Central India.

The next kings are almost unknown figures to us, till we come to Gautamiputra Śātakarni, the most powerful ruler of the dynasty. In *c.* A.D. 125 he defeated the foreign rulers who had in the meantime penetrated into the heart of India and held Central India for many years (Chapter X). Gautamiputra exterminated the foreign dynasty and extended his sphere of influence far and wide. His successor Vāsishthīputra Pulumāvī annexed the Telugu districts of the north of the Madras Presidency. But his successors suffered again at the hands of another foreign line known as the Western Satraps.

The Far South.

We do not know much about the political condition of the Far South. No doubt the powers which had existed at the time of Aśoka continued independently. The Cholas were noted for their military power and invaded the neighbouring kingdoms. They and the Pandyas carried on extensive maritime trade with the Eastern Archipelago and the Roman Empire. They had also developed some literature in their vernaculars.

C. Culture

Maritime activities.

A prominent feature of the civilization of this period is the immense amount of sea-borne trade which India carried on with the East and the West. This was the period when the Roman Empire reached its zenith of prosperity, and on India fell the task of supplying the Romans with articles of luxury. The extravagance of the Romans and their trade with India considerably drained their resources. The Roman imports from the East are said to have amounted to about one million pounds sterling per year, and half of this amount came to India. Spices, rice, muslins, cosmetics, tusks of elephants and other things formed the bulk of the merchandise. Roman coins which have been found in India in large hoards show that Indian merchants accepted them in return for their goods. So intimate was India's relation with Rome that Indian kings sent embassies to the Roman Emperors on various occasions. Bhṛigukachchha or Broach on the western coast, the Tamil city on the north of the Kāveri and Tāmralipti (Tāmluk in the Midnapur district, Bengal) were the principal ports of India. Not much is known about the import trade of India: spices from the Eastern Archipelago and silk from China were no doubt imported.

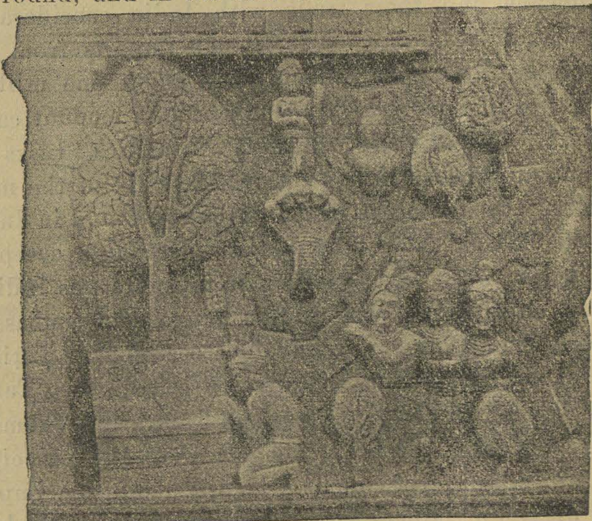
Guilds.

This brisk maritime trade must have required a good internal organization of traders. Inscriptions of this period acquaint us with the existence of numerous guilds which received deposits from the public on interest. It seems that the guilds also lent out money so that it may be said that they performed the duties of modern

banks. Ancient law-books laid down rules for the proper working of these guilds, and the king was exhorted to help and protect them.

Art.

The reign of the Śungas witnessed the construction of two huge *stupas* at Sānchi and Bharhut (both in Central India). At Sānchi Aśoka had built a *stupa* of bricks, but during the rule of the Śungas, it was enlarged and paved all over with stone. There are stone-railings all round, and in the four directions are four profusely



Bharhut bas-relief.

decorated gateways, which were built in the first century B.C. On the pillars as well as the architraves scenes depicting various scenes connected with Buddhism are beautifully carved. The Bharhut *stupa* which was erected in the time of the Śungas has now been completely dismantled and relics carried to the Indian

Museum of Calcutta. Other *stupas* were built at Gaya about this time and at Amrāwatī (Guntur district, Madras) at a slightly later date.

To this period also belong the Buddhist monastery at Bhājā, the *Chaitya* hall or place of Buddhist worship at Karle, the caves for the residence of monks at Nasik, and the Udayagiri and Khandagiri caves in Orissa—all of them being rock-cut, *i.e.*, not built of stone, brick and mortar, but hewn out of single rocks.

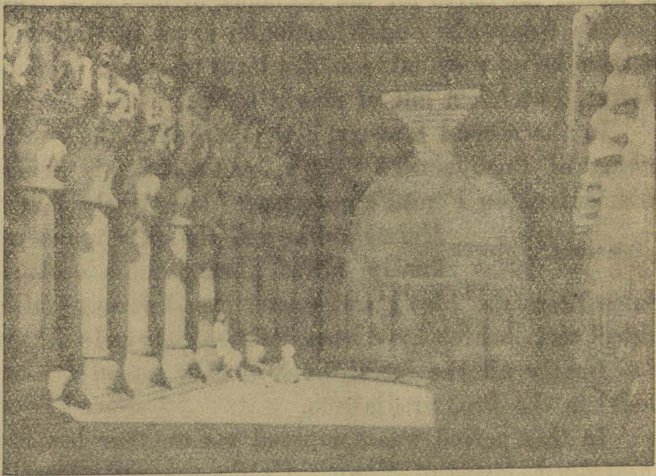
In the second century B.C. Pātanjali, the contemporary of Pushyamitra Śunga, composed his learned commentary on Pāṇini's grammar. It is likely that the *Mahābhārata and* the *Rāmāyana* were finally edited during these centuries. Some literature also grew among the different philosophical sects, which have been described above in Chapter V. Nearly all the inscriptions of this period are composed in the Prākrit dialects.

Literature.

In this period was composed yet another law-book, the *Dharmaśāstra* of Manu. Unlike the texts described above, it is a metrical work, but it does not differ much from them in spirit and outlook on life. The only point that may be noted here is the superiority of the Brahmanas which is uncompromisingly set forth in this text. It is declared that the Brahmana is the master of all the creation, that all sub-lunary things belong to him and that it is only because he allows it that other people possess property. This attitude was not entirely unknown in the earlier law-books, but in this extreme form it is for the first time met with in the *Dharmaśāstra* of Manu. It may be suspected that Manu is depicting the actual state of affairs, for in the centuries

The law-book of Manu.

immediately preceding and following Christ, there were at least three Brahmana dynasties in India, the Śunga, Kāṇva and Śātavāhana. This shows that there might have been an organized rise of Brahmanism at this period against the heterodoxy of the previous age.



Karle Chaitya.

Geography.

Though the whole of India was by this time known to the people and the *Āryāvarta* or Aryandom was defined as the land between the Himalayas and the Vindhyas, from sea to sea, the orthodox still regarded only a very limited area as sacred. The Western Punjab was no longer held in esteem, while the land about the river Sarasvati in the Eastern Punjab was regarded as the most sanctified land on earth and as the home of Brahmanas of ideal practices and customs. The area from the Sarasvati to Prayaga (Allahabad) was known as the Madhyadesa or 'Midland.'

CHAPTER X

FOREIGN RULE IN INDIA

A. The Indo-Greeks

Break-up of the Seleukid Empire.

In the middle of the third century B.C. Bactria and Parthia, two important provinces of the Syrian empire founded by Seleukos Nikator, broke away from the empire and became independent. The Bactrian revolt was led by the Greek governor of that province, Diodotos I, while in Parthia a national kingdom was founded by one Arsakes, who thus founded the Arsakid empire of Persia.

Bactria.

In Bactria Diodotos I was succeeded by his son Diodotos II, who however was killed by a rebel named Euthydemos. The latter was followed on the throne by his son Demetrios, who as we have already seen, invaded India in B.C. 175 (Chapter IX). Though he was repelled from heart of India, he was successful in retaining the Punjab.

The Indo-Greeks.

When Demetrios was busy in India he was deprived of his western possessions by another rebel Eukratides, who also proceeded to India and snatched away much of the Western Punjab from Demetrios. From this time onwards the north-western region was shared between princes of two rival dynasties, the one founded by Eukratides holding the western districts, and that of Demetrios the Eastern Punjab. Many Greek princes belonging to either of these dynasties are known to us from their coins found in the Punjab.

One such king was Menander (*c.* B.C. 120) who belonged to the house of Demetrios and had his capital at Sākala (Sialkot). He also led an expedition into the interior of India and came under the influence of Nāgasena, a Buddhist philosopher, who converted the Greek king to his own creed. A Pali text named the *Milinda-Pañha* (*Milindra praśna* in Sanskrit) purports to contain the questions of Menander and Nāgasena's learned answers thereto.

Menander.

Petty Indo-Greek principalities continued in the Punjab till the first century A.D. But the effect of the Greek rule in India was very limited in range and character. The influence of Graeco-Roman art is visible in the Buddhist images of the north-west; but the sculptures showing this influence belong not to the age of the Indo-Greeks but to a slightly later period. The Indians also borrowed certain astronomical ideas from the Greeks who had a superior knowledge of that science. There are many other probable debts of India to Greece, but they all have an air of uncertainty about them.

Greek Influence

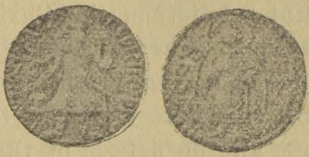
B. THE SĀKAS, PARTHIANS AND KUSHĀNS.

About the middle of the second century B.C. events of great moment were taking place in Central Asia. The Hiung-nu, a nomadic tribe of Turkistan, became restive and ousted the Yue-chi tribes who were forced to move to the south. The Skythian or Scythian tribes being thus dispossessed of their land fell upon Parthia which was under the rule of the Arsakids.

Central Asia.

In course of time the Skythians, known in India as the Śākas, turned their eyes to India. The first Śāka king of the Western Punjab was Maues, who is known to us from his coins and inscriptions and seems to have held sway just

The Śākas.



Greek Coins.

before the birth of Christ. He was succeeded by Azes in whose time the Śākas extended their sway over the Eastern Punjab as well. There were other Śāka kings in the Punjab, but it is extremely difficult to re-construct their chronology and mutual relationship.

Satrapies.

The Śākas carried on their government by assigning provinces to hereditary governors known as Satraps (Sanskritised into *Kshatrapa*) after the Persian fashion. In Northern India there were two satrapies, at Taxila and Mathura. We are acquainted with the names of some Satraps, such as Liaka-Kusūlaka and Śodāsa of Mathura.

The Parthians.

The Parthians did not lag behind the Śākas in attempting the conquest of North-Western India. Even when the Greeks, Euthydemos and Demetrios, were conquering India, Mithradates I, the king of Persia, had made some annexations in the Punjab. About the beginning of the first century A.D. the Parthians began to supplant the Śāka rule in the north-west. A Parthian king of India was Gondophares or Gondopherues, whose name is of some importance because of his association with St.

Thomas, the Christian apostle. It is said that St. Thomas took some money from the Indian king to build him a palace, but spent the amount in alms-giving. He was therefore thrown into prison, but the king becoming aware that a palace had been built for him in heaven, released the Saint. Later on the Christian is said to have visited the South, where he had to die a martyr's death at the hands of a king. A mound near Mylapore in Madras is still shown as marking the site of the Saint's tomb, but all the details of the story may not be true.

It has been said above that the Yue-chi tribes began to retreat southwards before the rising power of the Hiung-nu, and ultimately settled on the banks of the Oxus (Āmū Darya). The Kushāns, one of the five Yue-chi tribes, began to grow powerful under Kujūla Kadaphises or Kadaphises I. His exact date is uncertain, but his Indian invasion may be dated *c.* A.D. 40. He carved out an empire extending from Central Asia to the Indus and effaced away all traces of the Parthian occupation of those lands. He is said to have died at the age of eighty.

The Kushāns.

Kadaphises I.

He was succeeded by his son Wima Kadaphises, called Kadaphises II, who penetrated into India as far as the Gangetic valley. According to some his accession took place in A.D. 78, while others would push back the event by several years.

Kadaphises II.

Chinese chronicles record that in A.D. 90 the king of India demanded in marriage the daughter of the Chinese emperor Ho-ti. Being refused he sent an expedition across the Pamirs but the army met a reverse at

the hands of Pan-chao, the Chinese general, and the Indian king was compelled to pay tribute to Ho-ti.

Eras.

The obscurity about the chronology of the Śāka, Parthian and Kushān rulers of India is to a great extent due to the fact that the inscriptions of this age are dated in more than one unspecified era. The oldest of them seems to have been started by the Śākas sometime in the second half of the second century B.C., but it never became popular in the interior of India. The next era of this age was the Vikrama era started in B.C. 57, which Indian tradition regards as having been founded by the heroic Vikramaditya of Malwa.

The second Śāka era, started in A.D. 78, is still current in Bengal and the South, but it remains to be decided who was its originator. Some scholars believe that as the reign of Kadaphises II must have begun about A.D. 78 it is reasonable to ascribe the era to him. Others, however, hold that Kanishka I, the successor of Kadaphises II, has better claims to be regarded as its founder. There is yet another probability that the era had its origin in one of the Satrapal houses of Central India, which will be mentioned below.

After Kadaphises II there was a lapse of several years, after which Kanishka I became king at Purushapura (Peshawar). Various dates, ranging from A.D. 78 to 150, or even later, have been ascribed to him, but they are all provisional. His empire extended at least up to Benares in the east. He conquered Kashgar and Khotan beyond the Pamir and had Chinese princes confined as hostages at his court. He also defeated the king of Parthia to the west and was therefore the master of a very wide empire. He had an intimate connection

with Kashmir, where he founded a city named Kanishkapura and built several *stupas*. He also constructed some buildings of great skill in Gāndhāra. On his coins we find the figures of Greek, Zoroastrian, Indian and other gods, as well as of Buddha.

The Buddhist Council.

Kanishka's fame rests on his patronage of Buddhism, in the annals of which his name stands second only to that of Aśoka. He convoked in Kashmir a Buddhist Council which prepared commentaries on the scriptures. The deliberations of the Council were recorded on plates of copper, which were buried under a *Stūpa* especially built for the purpose. It seems that the Council was the venue of only a particular Hīnayāna Buddhist sect, Sarvastivādins.

Mahāyānism.

At this period a great change was coming over Buddhism, which, however, was not due to Kanishka. Already the Church was divided into a number of schools, but by this time the great schism which brought Mahāyāna into existence was an accomplished fact. The main features of the Mahāyāna creed have been given above in connection with Buddhism and need not be repeated here.

The Court.

Only a few kings can boast of a such court is that of Kanishka. The most celebrated Buddhist of the time was Aśvaghosha who, besides being a great philosopher, was a poet of first-rate merit, and the author of Buddhist epics (Kāvya) and dramas, some of which have been discovered in Central Asia. There were other learned Buddhists such as Vasumitra, Pārsva and Samgharaksha, besides Charaka, the greatest writer on Medical Science in ancient India.

Kanishka died after a reign of twenty-three years and was succeeded by Vāsishka who reigned for about five years. He was succeeded by Huvishka, whose relationship with Kanishka II, another king ruling about the same time, is not clear. The last king was Vāsudeva who held the throne from about the year 70 to the year 100 of the Kanishka era, whenever it might have begun. It seems that during his time the Kushān hold was confined to the Mathura region only.

Successors.

C. The Satraps of Western India

According to tradition the Śākas penetrated into Central India for the first time in B.C. 61, but were driven out thence by Vikramāditya in B.C. 57.

B.C. 61.

The first sure Śāka occupation of Central and Western India took place somewhat later under Nahapāna, who belonged to the Kshaharāta family and was governor (Satrap) of the Punjab. His date is uncertain, and according to a probable view the Śāka era vas founded by him or one of his predecessors. Others, however, would place them somewhat earlier.

The Kshaharāta.

Nahapāna was defeated in the first quarter of the second century A.D. by Gautamīputra Śātakarni of the Śātavāhana dynasty (see Chapter IX). But the Śātavāhanas had soon to yield place to another Satrapal family, which seems to have extended into Central and Western India from Gujarat. The first ruler of the line was Chashtana of Ujjain, for whom we have the date of A.D. 130. His grand-

The Western Satraps.

Rudradāman.

son Rudradāman was a great conqueror, whose empire extended over Sind, Gujarat, Malwa and Konkan. In his inscription at Junagadh (Kathiawad) he is said to have been a prince of considerable accomplishment with great literary taste and mastery over Sanskrit poetics. He repaired a lake in Girnar which had been built by Chandragupta Maurya and improved upon by Aśoka.

D. Effects of Foreign Rule

Art: Gāndhāra School.

The cultural condition of India at this period has been described already in the last chapter and here we may confine ourselves only to some aspects which were influenced by the prolonged existence of foreigners in India. The greatest gift of foreign rule in India is the Buddhist art which flourished in the north-west from the first century A.D. technically known as the Gāndhāra School of Art, distinct in all respects from the early Indian Art of Sanchi and Bharhut. A feature of this art was the representation of the forms of Buddha who had never been depicted in stone by the older artists of Central India. There seems to have grown up in this locality a band of sculptors who were influenced by examples of foreign art, for in their executions Graeco-Roman influence is palpable. But though the form might have been foreign, the subject-matter was always Indian, being drawn from Buddhist legends and mythology. The foreign influence does not seem to have been directly due to the Greek rule of the Punjab, for the images mostly belong to the reign of the Parthians and the Kushāns and not of the Indo-Greeks.

Simultaneously with the growth of the Gāndhāra art, Mathura became a great centre of the Buddhists and Jainas, who erected here many buildings, *stupas* and images. The Mathura specimens do not compare favourably with the Gāndhāra productions, but they have a definite place in the history of Indian art. The Mathura School is more national in the sense that it inherited some traditions of the Bharhut and Sanchi artists, but in some respects the influence of Gāndhāra too is visible. The Mathura figures have often a stiff and unrefined look and lack the elegance of the contemporary Gāndhāra images.

Mathura School.


Buddha.

The foreigners lost their culture and traditions and adopted Indian ones within a short time. The rapidity with which they were assimilated in the Indian population is amazing. Not to speak of the Greeks, Heliodoros and Menander, Kadaphises II became a worshipper of Śiva, Kanishka of Buddha and his successors of Śiva again.

Assimilation of foreigners.

The rule of the foreigners connected India more intimately with her northern and western neighbours. Trade through the land route was in a flourishing state. During the reign of the Kushāns Buddhism spread to

Relation with outside.

China and Central Asia, where some Buddhist manuscripts of the second century A.D. have been found.

Sanskrit was greatly patronised in the court of Kanishka. The poet philosopher Aśvaghosha wrote epics and dramas on Buddhism in elegant and refined Sanskrit. The *Divyavādana*, containing Buddhist legends and stories, was composed about this time; and so was the *Lalitāvistāra* which contains the life of Buddha.

Literature.

The Western Satraps greatly encouraged Sanskrit. While the inscriptions of the contemporary Śātavāhanas, who were Brahmanas, are in Prākrit, the Western Satraps always used Sanskrit in their lapidary records In his inscription Rudradāman boasts of his ability to write ornamental Sanskrit prose and verse; his inscription itself is a landmark in the history of Sanskrit literature, as it is the first specimen of a composition in cultured prose that has come down to us.

It is therefore wrong to suppose that foreign rule in India hindered the growth of Indian genius in any way. Far from being a hampering factor, it gave a definite impetus to everything Indian, both in North-Western and Central India.

CHAPTER XI

THE GUPTA EMPIRE

A. The Imperial Guptas

The Nāgas.

From the first century A.D. Northern and Central India was held by different houses of the Nāga family which obtained great fame and power. The Bhāraśivas who formed one such Nāga house, obtained precedence over others and performed the *Aśvamedha* sacrifices. Some attempts have recently been made to give a connected account of the Nāgas in general and the Bhāraśivas in particular, but no definite results have yet been reached in this direction.

Chandra Gupta I

The first stable empire in Northern India after that of Kanishka was founded by Chandra Gupta I, the son of a local chief named Ghatotkacha and the grandson of Gupta. He seems to have started his career with Magadha as his base and conquered as far west as Allahabad and Oudh. He assumed the proud title of *Mahārājadhirāja* and strengthened his position by marrying Kumāradevī, a princess of the Lichchhavi clan. The Gupta era which began in A.D. 319-20 may mark the beginning of his imperial rule.

Samudra Gupta

His son Samudra Gupta (*c.* A.D. 335 to 375) was the real founder of the Gupta empire. We are acquainted with his heroic exploits through his Allahabad pillar-inscription, which

divides his conquests and foreign relations under four heads:—

(1) The kings of *Aryāvarta* or Northern India, some of whom were no doubt Nāga Chiefs,[1] were conquered and deposed and their territories annexed;

(2) The kings of the south-eastern coast as far south as Kānchī (Conjeeveram near Madras) were defeated but reinstated on their respective thrones;[2]

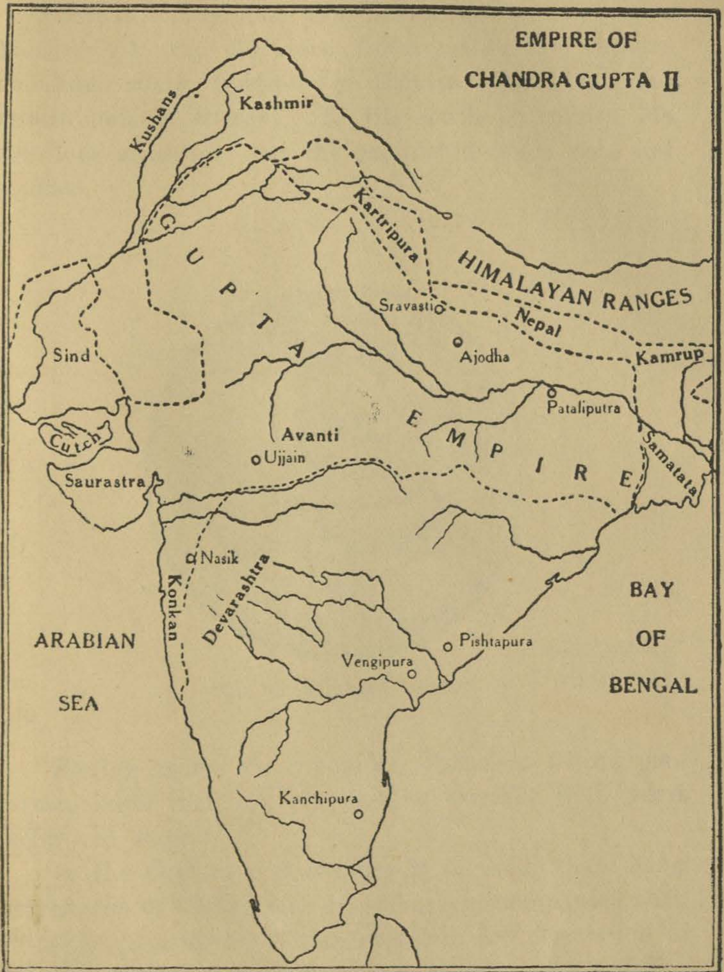
(3) The kings of the frontiers such as Samatata (East, Central Bengal), Daraka (unidentified), Kamarupa (Assam), Nepala (Nepal), Kartripura (? hill districts of the U.P.), the tribal government of the Punjab and Rajputana, *viz.*, the Malavas, Yaudheyas, Madrakas, Abhirats, etc., as well as the forest chiefs of Baghelkhand and Chota Nagpur were subservient to him; and

(4) The independent Śāka Chiefs of the north-west and the kings of Ceylon and other islands held him in respect.

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1 Their names are: Rudradeva, Matila, Nāgadatta, Chandravarman, Ganapati-nāga, Nāgasena, Achyuta, Nandi and Balavarman.

2 They are: Mahendra of (Southern) Kosala, Vyāghra cf Mahākāntāva, Manṭadaja of Kurāla (? Kerala), Mahendragiri (?) cf Pishṭapura, Svāmidatta of Koṭṭūra, Damana of Frandapath, Vishnu gopa of Kāñchī, Nīlarāja of Aramukta, Hastivarman of Vengi, Ugrasena of Palakka, Kubera of Devarāshtra and Dhanañjaya of Kusthalapura. Most of these places have been located on the Orissa and Madras Coast; the previous theory that Samudra-Gupta returned through Mahārāshtra and Khandesh was based on some wrong identifications and is now untenable.


EMPIRE OF
CHANDRA GUPTA II
Kashmir
Kushans
Kartripura
HIMALAYAN RANGES
GUPTA EMPIRE
Sravasti
Nepal
Ajodha
Kamrup
Sind
Pataliputra
Cutch
Avanti
Ujjain
Samatata
Saurastra
Nasik
Devarashtra
Konkan
BAY
OF
BENGAL
ARABIAN
SEA
Pishtapura
Vengipura
Kanchipura

From this it is clear that Samudra Gupta's empire extended all over Northern India up to the Jumna, including some portion of Central India and the western half of Bengal. In the south he carried his victorious arms far. but the conquered lands were not annexed.



Coin of Samudra Gupta.

Having made his conquests, Samudra Gupta performed more than one *Aśvamedha* sacrifice with great pomp and show.

In the Ceylonese chronicles it is said that King Meghvarna of Ceylon sent an embassy accompanied with valuable gifts to the Indian monarch for permission to build a convent at Bodh-Gaya which was readily granted.

Samudra Gupta's inscription tells us that he was a poet and musician of great merit and a prince of great liberality He issued many types of gold

coins, one of which portrays him with a lyre in his hand.

Samudra Gupta seems to have been succeeded by his son of Rama Gupta, a weak man whose queen was demanded by a Śāka chieftain. But Chandra Gutpa his younger brother, murdered the Śāka prince in the attire of a woman, assassinated Rāma Gupta, married the widow Dhruvadevi and himself ascended the throne. Some historians, however, do not accept the story as true and regard Chandra Gupta (II) as the direct successor of Samudra Gupta in *c.* A.D. 375.

Rāma Gupta.

The important event in Chandra Gupta's reign was the defeat of the Western Satraps of Ujjain, the dynasty of Chashtana and Rudradāman. The expedition (*c.* A.D. 390) resulted in the annexation of Malwa and Gujarat to the Gupta empire and brought the Guptas in touch with the powerful Vākātaka kings of the Central Deccan. Rudrasena II, a Vākātaka prince, was married to Prabhāvati Gupta, the daughter of Chandra Gupta II. This alliance was highly advantageous to both the parties: the Guptas were assured of a powerful ally on their southern frontier; while the Vākātakas became safe from any possible aggression from their northern rivals.

Chandra Gupta II.

Chandra Gupta II was also known as Deva Gupta and bore the surname Vikramāditya. During his reign, Fa Hien, a Buddhist pilgrim from China, visited India. Having started on his travels in A.D. 399, he crossed the Pamirs and reached India in A.D. 401. He travelled over India till 410, when he took ship from the eastern port of Tāmralipti and sailed to the Eastern

Archipelago. A summary of his observations about India will be given below.

Chandra Gupta died in *c.* A.D. 413 and was succeeded by his son Kumāra Gupta I, who assumed the title of Mahendrāditya. Though he performed an *Aśsvamedha* sacrifice, he had an uneasy time towards the latter part of his reign on account of the rising of the Pushyamitra tribe and the invasion of the Hūnas.

Kumāra Gupta I.

Towards the latter part of the fourth century A.D. the Hūnas, a savage tribe of the steppes of Asia, began to move. One branch went to Europe, where, however, they were quickly suppressed. They began to pour forth into India in the middle of the fifth century A.D. and shook the very foundations of the Gupta empire.

The Hūnas.

Skanda Gupta Vikramāditya, son of Kumāra Gupta, succeeded to the uneasy throne in A.D. 455. He was a king of great personal bravery. We are told in his inscriptions on the pillar at Bhitari (Ghazipur district) that the Pushyamitras were defeated and their chief was reduced to humility. Then he was engaged in a deadly conflict with the Hūnas, and the earth was shaken by his terrible arms. Thus having conquered his enemies by his bravery, he re-established the ruined fortunes of the family. But his wars told heavily on the treasury and he was constrained to issue a horde of debased coins.

Skanda Gupta.

In A.D. 467 he handed over an undiminished empire to his brother Pura Gupta Vikramāditya who had a very short reign. Then followed in quick succession Narasimha Gupta Bālāditya

Pura Gupta.

and Kumāra Gupta II Kramāditya, who ceased to rule by A.D. 477. In that year the throne passed to Buddha Gupta (A.D. 477—S. 496), whose relationship with the preceding emperors is not known. In spite of the rapid change of kings after Skanda Gupta, the empire still extended from Eastern Malwa to Bengal. But Gujarat and Western Malwa had slipped out of the Gupta empire, though intermittent attempts were made to re-conquer the lost territory.

Buddha Gupta

Some other kings of the Gupta dynasty are known to us from their coins and inscriptions, such as Bhānu Gupta, Vainya-Gupta; but their places in the genealogical list are uncertain.

Successors.

B. Contemporary Rulers

The Vākātaka dynasty was founded in the Central Provinces in *c.* A.D. 250 by Vindhyaśakti about whose ancestry nothing is known. His grandson Gautamīputra married a daughter of king Bhavanāga of the powerful Bhāraśiva dynasty mentioned above. The dynasty was brought into relationship with the Guptas when Rudrasena II, the great grandson of Gautamīputra married Prabhāvatī Gupta, the daughter of Chandra Gupta II.

At its highest the Vākātaka empire extended over a wide tract of land, including parts of Orissa, the Central Provinces, Hyderabad and the Western Coast. The dynasty continued independently till *c.* 550.

During the rule of the Guptas, Baghelkhand and the districts round Jubbulpore were held by chiefs of two different dynasties, the Parivrājaka-Mahārājas

and the Mahārājas of Mchchakalpa, the former certainly and the latter probably owing the suzerainty of the Guptas.

Valabhi.

In c. 470 General (*Senapati*) Bhaṭārka founded the Maitraka dynasty at Valabhī (Walah in Kathiawad). The third ruler of the dynasty assumed the title of Mahārāja, while the later kings called themselves *Mahārājādhirāja*. The dynasty continued till c. 770 and is known to us from many charters recording grants of land made by its rulers.

The Hūnas.

Skanda Gupta succeeded in checking the Hūna aggression only for a short time. Under their leader Toramāṇa they again reached the interior of India and by 490 we find them holding much of the Central Indian plateau. Toramāṇa was succeeded by his son Mihirakula, who is said to have been defeated by the Gupta king Bālāditya. Local Hūna chiefs and principalities continued to exist in Northern India for a long time to come.

Yaśodharman.

The credit for the final defeat of Mihirakula must be ascribed to a prince of Central India named Yaśodharman, one of whose inscriptions is dated A.D. 532. Nothing is known about his ancestors and successors, and he himself would have remained unknown to us but for his three inscriptions found at Mandasor (Central India). Therein he is represented as a king of great power, who subjugated the whole of India, up to the Brahmaputrā, the Eastern Ghats, the Himalayas and the Arabian Sea, and humbled Mihirakula. Making the largest allowance for these eulogies characteristic of court poets, it is impossible not to

conclude that Yaśodharman was a great king who tried to establish a vast empire for himself and made wide conquests.

We have evidence of the continuance of Gupta rule in Bengal till *c.* A.D. 540, but soon after Bengal seems to have declared its independence. We know the names of some kings of this period, but nothing is known about their origin and the extent of their territories.

Bengal.

In *c.* 500 the Maukharīs established themselves probably at Kanauj as a feudatory dynasty. The fourth king of the dynasty was Īśānavarman who assumed the imperial title of *Mahārājādhirāja* and led expeditions to Bengal and the South. One of his inscriptions is dated A.D. 554; he therefore belonged to the middle of the sixth century. The last prince was Grahvarman, with whom the dynasty came to an end in 606.

The Maukharīs.

At Gaya there was a feudatory branch of the Maukharīs.

We know of the existence of another line of Gupta rulers, called the Later Guptas, as distinct from the Imperial Guptas descended from Chandra Gupta I. The subsequent kings of the line ruled in Bihar; but it is likely that their original home was Malwa, whence they were transplanted in Magadha in the reign of Harshavardhana.

The Later Guptas.

The fourth king of the dynasty was Kumāra Gupta (III), who entered into hostile relations with the Maukharī king Īśānavarman. He is credited with wide conquests extending over Bengal and the Deccan. His grandson Mahāsena Gupta defeated the king of

Assam and married his sister to Ādityavardhana of Thāneshwar.

There was a temporary eclipse in the history of the Later Guptas when Harsha ruled at Kanauj, but after his death independence was resumed. The dynasty came to an end in *c.* 720.

C. The Gupta Age

The Gupta empire stands at the centre of ancient Indian history. All previous history flows into it; all later history issues out of it; it is a period of bloom in every direction of national activity.

Government.

The Gupta empire was a federal organisation of zones enjoying different degrees of independence. At the top stood the emperor, who now assumed high-sounding titles such as *Mahārājādhirāja* (in imitation of Māhārāja Rājātirāja of the Kushāns), *Paramabhaṭṭāraka*, *Chakrawartin* and the like. The emperor himself governed the districts round about the capital. Beyond the zone of the emperor's personal rule, there were provinces (*bhukti*) under governors, variously known as *Bhogika, Bhogapati*, *Goptṛi*, etc. The empire was subdivided into districts (*vishaya*), the governors of which were called *Vishaya-pati*, appointed by the emperor or provincial governors. The village was under a headman known *Grāma-pati*. City officers were called *Drāngika*. There were many great officers of the State, such as *Dandanāyaka* (Judicial Officer), *Mahasenāpati*, *Balādhyaksha* (Military Officers), *Dandapāśika* (police officer), etc. Each department had an office with a heirarchy of oficers. One man often held more than one office. Hereditary officers were very common.

A large number of Gupta inscriptions inscribed on copper plates record the grant of lands to Brahmanas; the conditions and privileges of the grant are minutely described and the area granted is accurately fixed. The state also undertcok various works of public utility, such as irrigation, building of temples, laying out gardens, founding cities, etc. The great University o Nālandā, of which more will be said in the next chapter, was established in this age and owed its maintenance to royal patronage.

State Activities.

The accounts of Fa-Hien leave the impression that the administration was milder than that of the Mauryas, and the vigorous state control in every direction, a feature of the Maurya government, was much relaxed now. Speaking of the Madhyadesa,[3] which included a large portion of the Gupta empire, he says:

Administration.

> 'The climate of this country is warm and equable, without frost or snow. The people are very well off, without poll-tax or official restrictions. Only those who till the royal lands return a portion of the profit of the land. If they desire to go, they go; if they like to stop they stop. The kings govern without corporal punishment; the criminals are fined, according to circumstances, lightly or heavily. Even in cases of repeated rebellion they only cut off the right hand.'

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[3] For the Brahmanical definition of the term, see Chapter IX. The Buddhists included under it Bihar and a large portion of Bengal. It is in the latter sense that Fa-Hien used the word.

The Guptas most probably did not belong to one of the higher castes. The Kṣhatriyas, as a ruling caste, had well-nigh disappeared at this time. The Brahmanas were divided into many branches (*Śākhā*) according to the school of Vedic studies to which they belonged. The position of the lowest classes of the society was hard indeed. Fa-Hien says of the Chāndālas:

> "The Chāndālas are named 'evil men' and dwell apart from others; if they enter a town or market, they sound a piece of wood in order to separate themselves; these men, knowing who they are, avoid coming in contact with them. The Chāndālas only hunt and sell flesh."

Fa-Hien also says that throughout the country the people killed no living thing nor drank wine, nor did they eat garlic or onions, with the exception of Chāndālas.

The Guptas were orthodox followers of the Brahmanical religion, Vishṇu being their favourite deity. They began their imperial career with the celebration of an *Aśvamedha* sacrifice which was repeated by some subsequent kings. The worship of Vishṇu, especially in the form of Boar, was very popular. There are also evidence for the worship of Śiva and the Sun.

Religion.

From the accounts of Fa-Hien it does not appear that Buddhism was declining. He found both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna flourishing in all places that he visited. The old centres of Buddhism, *e.g.*, Śrāvastī and Kapilavastu were deserted. But shortly after the

visit of Fa-Hien Buddhism entered on its path of decline. The lack of state patronage in the east and the Hūna depradations in the north-west may be regarded as the immediate causes of its decay.

In the Kushān age the two centres of lapidary art were Gāndhāra and Mathura. In the Gupta period the centre of activity shifts eastwards to Sārnāth and Nālandā.

Art.

The images of this period are characterised by a calm repose of the face, a spiritual expression reflecting peaceful contemplation of the mind. They have been rightly regarded as being 'among the greatest contributions which India has made to the World's Art.' At the two places mentioned above art was almost wholly Buddhistic. We find a great advance in the variety of the poses of the images, and in the carving of the haloes. The Brahmanical images of the ages are no less beautiful. Some images of Śiva carved in Central India under the Guptas, or possibly under the Vākātakas are excellent specimens of all that is best in the art of the age.

Some temples of the age have also been found, of which mention may be made of those at Bhumarā in Nāgod and Deogarh (Jhansi district) and Bhitārgaon (Cawnpore district). At this period we come across *Śikhara* or lofty spire over the top of the temple, which became the characteristic of North-Indian temples.

In dealing with the art of the age, we must include the paintings of the caves at Ajantā (Nizam's Dominions), though Ajantā was not included in the empire of the Guptas. The paintings in the caves of Ajantā, which, by the way, were dug in different periods, only a few being the execution of the

period under study, are so beautiful that it is impossible to speak too highly of them. Though the work of the Buddhists, they do not show any puritanic qualities. The scenes pulsate with feelings of human life, and yet retain a spiritual quality, never degenerating into voluptuous productions.

Science.

The iron pillar of King Chandra at Mehrauli (Delhi) made of wrought iron, still with no trace of rust on its surface and the copper image of Buddha, seventy feet in height, which was seen by Hiuang Tsang at Nālanda, testify to the advanced knowledge of metallurgy. Besides, the Gupta period produced two great astronomers of India, Aryabhata (born 476) and Varahamihira (505—587). Slightly later in date was another astronomer Brahmagupta (born 598).

Literature.

A similar impulse is found in the literary field as well. Some of the Puranas received their final edition in this age. Some important law-texts, notably those ascribed to Vājñavalkya, Nārada and Vishṇu were most probably Gupta products. It is also usually held that this was the age of the greatest Sanskrit poet Kālidāsa, whom tradition associates with Vikramāditya (Chandra Gupta II?) and Pravarasena who must have been one of the Vākātaka princes of that name. The tradition, however, is so confused that it cannot be regarded as a sure proof of the date of the poet. He was the author of two *Kāvyas*, the *Kumāra-sambhava* and the *Raghuvamsa;* of three dramas, the *Mālavikāgni Mitra*, the *Vikramorvasīya* and the *Śākuntala;* and of two lyrics, the *Ritusamhāra* and the *Meghdūta.* In the simplicity of style and sweetness of diction, combined with high

poetic ideas, Kālidāsa is unsurpassed by any other Sanskrit poet.

The *Panchatantra*, the most famous book of fables, in Sanskrit, was composed in this period, or perhaps somewhat earlier. Its fables spread to Persia and Arabia and ultimately to Europe.



Ajanta Painting.

The Renaissance Theory.

In the nineteenth century it was believed that the Sāka and Kushān rule in India eclipsed the Sanskrit language which had its Renaissance in the middle of the sixth century A.D. But as we have already seen,

Sanskrit was never a dormant language in India and was patronized by even foreign rulers. Right at the threshold of the literary history of the Gupta period



Ajanta Painting.

stands the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta, which by its highly polished technical qualities, betrays a long process of literary development behind it.

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

A. The Imperial Guptas

GUPTA

Ghatotkacha

Chandra Gupta I
(*c*. 319—*c*. 335)
Kumāradevi of the
Lichhavi clan.

Samudra Gupta
(*c*. 335—375)

- Rāma Gupta (*c*. 375)
- Chandra Gupta II (*c*. 375—413)
  - Kumāra Gupta I (*c*. 413—455)
    - Skanda Gupta (*c*. 455—467)
    - Pura Gupta (*c*. 467—470)
      - Narasimha Gupta (*c*. 470—473)
        - Kumāra Gupta II (*c*. 473—477)
          - Budha Gupta (*c*. 477—496)
            - Bhānu Gupta
              - Vainya Gupta
  - Prabhāvati—Gupta
    Rudrasena II Vākāṭaka

B. The Vākātakas

VINDHYAŚAKTI
|
Pravarasena I
|
Gautamīputra—Daughter of Bhavanaga of the Bharaśiva dynasty
|
Rudrasena I
|
Prithivishena I
|
Rudrasena II—Prabhāvati Gupta, daughter of Chandra Gupta II.
|
Divākarasena | Dāmodarsenā | Pravarasena II

Pravarasena II
|
Narendrasena
|
Prithivīshena | Devasena

Devasena
|
Harishena

C. The Maukharīs

HARIVARMAN
|
Adityavarman-Harasha Gupta, daughter of Krishna Gupta of the Later Gupta dynasty
|
Īśvaravarman
|
Īśānavarman (554)
|
Sūryavarman | Sārvavarman

Sārvavarman
|
Avantivarman
|
Grahavarman-Rājyaśrī, daughter of Prabhākara of Thaneshwar.

D. The Later Guptas

KRISHNA GUPTA

Harsha Gupta — Harsha Gupta-Ādityavarman Maukhari

Jīvita Gupta I

Kumāra Gupta III

Dāmodara Gupta

Mahāsena Gupta — Mahāsena Gupta-Ādityavardhana of Thaneshwar

Deva Gupta II[4] — Kumāra Gupta[5] — Mādhava Gupta[6]

Ādityasena

Deva Gupta III

Vishṇu Gupta

Jīvita Gupta II

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4 Deva Gupta being another name of Chandra Gupta II, this prince may be called Deva Gupta II.

5 This prince never ruled.

6 Mādhava Gupta was a friend of Harsha, who seems to have set him over Magadha. After the death of Harsha, Mādhava Gupta's successors declared independence and ruled over Magadha for some generations more.

The Maitrakas of Valabhī

BHATĀRKA (*c*. 470–80)

Dharasena I (*c*. 480—500) | Dronasimha (*c*. 500—20) | Dhruvasena I (*c*. 520—50) | Duarapaṭṭa

Guhasena (*c*. 550–70)

Dharasena II (*c*. 570—95)

Śilāditya (*c*. 595–610) | Kharagraha I (*c*. 610—15)

Dharasena III (*c*. 615—25) | Dhruvasena II (*c*. 625—40)

Derabhaṭṭa

Dharasena IV (*c*. 640—51)

Dhruvasena III (*c*. 651—55) | Kharagraha II (*c* 655—60) | Śīlāditya II (*c*. 660—65)

Śīlāditya III (*c*. 669—90)

Śīlāditya IV (*c* 690–710)

Śīlāditya V (*c*. 710—35)

Śīlāditya VI (*c*. 735—65)

Śīlāditya VII (*c*. 765—80)

CHAPTER XII

THE VARDHANA EMPIRE

When the Later Guptas and the Maukharīs were fighting with each other, Ādityavardhana, the chief of Sthānviśvara (Thaneshwar in the Eastern Punjab) strengthened his position by marrying the sister of Mahāsena Gupta of Malwa and laid the foundation of the future greatness of his dynasty. His son Prabhākaravardhana defeated the Hūnas and conquered (Sind), Northern Gujarat and some other principalities. He also defeated Mahāsena-Gupta of Malwa and brought his two younger princes, Kumāra Gupta and Mādhava Gupta to his court, to be companions of his sons Rajyavardhana and Harshavardhana.

The House of Thaneshwar.

Prabhākaravardhana had two sons and a daughter. The eldest, Rājyavardhana, was born in *c.* 586, Harshavardhana in *c.* 590 and the daughter Rājyaśrī in *c.* 592. In *c.* 605 Rājyaśrī was married to Grahavarman Maukharī of Kanauj. The same year Rājyavardhana was sent on an expedition against the Hūnas, but he had soon to come back to occupy the throne rendered vacant by his father's sudden death. But before he was anointed king, news arrived that his brother-in-law Grahavarman had been killed by Deva Gupta, king of Malwa, probably the eldest son of Mahāsena Gupta, and that Deva Gupta's ally, Śaśānka the king of Bengal, had

Rājyavardhana.

captured Rājyaśrī at Kanauj. Rājyavardhana at once proceeded to Malwa and defeated Deva-Gupta but was himself killed by Śaśānka. The Vardhanas were thus threatened by a formidable combination of the Guptas of Malwa and the independent king of Bengal.

Harshavardhana

Harshavardhana was only about sixteen when he was called to the throne. He went to Kanauj to rescue Rājyaśrī, only to find that she had escaped. Led by wild people, he at length found her in a forest, on the point of committing suicide by jumping into a fire. She was rescued and brought to Kanauj where the ministers of Grahavarman gave the throne to Harsha. Harsha's kingdom now included Kanauj and Thaneshwar. The Harsha era of A.D. 606 marks the date of his accession.

With Harsha on the throne, the two houses of Thaneshwar and Kanauj became one. The latter place had already become one of the political centres of India under the Maukharīs; under Harsha it became the chief city of Northern India. For centuries to come Kanauj retained the prestige of an imperial centre and held the same status as Pātaliputra in older times.

Political Conditions.

The first years of Harsha's reign were spent in the creation of an empire. He had taken a vow to kill Śaśānka of Bengal; but he does not seem to have gained any success against him, for we find Śaśānka ruling till at least 619; how long Śaśānka lived after that date we do not know. In 625, however, Bengal was in the possession of Harsha's ally, Bhaskaravarman of Assam. In the Deccan Harsha's army met with re-

verses in *c.* 630 at the hand of Pulakeśin, the Chalukya king of Mahārāshtra. Gujarat continued an independent existence under the Valabhi rulers, though Dhruvasena of that dynasty was Harsha's ally and a relative by marriage. Ujjain was held by a Brahmana ruler who does not seem to have been subordinate to Harsha. Harsha's empire, therefore, was not very wide in extent, not even to be compared with that of the Imperial Guptas: the Eastern Punjab, the United Provinces and a part of Bihar are the only provinces which can with certainty be pronounced to have belonged to Harsha. The inclusion of Nepal is possible, but by no means certain. Towards the end of his reign (*c.* 643) Harsha led an expedition to Ganjām (north of the Madras Presidency), but with what result we do not know.

Bāṇa.

Bāṇa, the greatest mast.. of Sanskrit prose, was a contemporary of Harsha. He was the author of the *Harsha-Charita* or the 'Deeds of Harsha' and the *Kādambarī*, a romance, both of extraordinary literary merit. Divested of its panegyrics and exaggerations, the *Harsha-Charita* is remarkably true about historical facts and contains a faithful account of the early life of Harsha.

Hiuan-Tsang.

Hiuan-Tsang,[1] the Chinese traveller, is the most important of the Chinese Buddhists who visited India from time to time. Passing through the desert of Gobi and Khotan, he reached Afganistan and crossing the Khaibar pass

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[1] Also spelt Hiouen Thsang, Hiuen Tsiang, Hsuan Chwang, Yuan Chwang, Yuan Chuang, etc.

entered India in 629 and after a stay of fifteen years, during which he visited all the important places of India, he left India in 644. Unlike Fa-Hien he took interest in other things besides Buddhism and often visited royal courts. His account of India, called the *Si-yu-ki*, contains a mass of Buddhist legends that he heard and read in India, descriptions of places and ruins, and details about the political divisions of India and the condition of the people. He returned to his native place in 645, laden with gifts and honours. He died in 664 A.D. and has always remained famous for his learning and religious zeal.

The Assemblies.

On an invitation from Harsha the pilgrim met him in 642. In his honour the king called an assembly for religious discussion at Kanauj, which was attended by twenty-two kings. After this the assembly moved to Prayaga (Allahabad) for the quinquennial gathering of 643. Here Harsha used to give away as alms all the wealth accumulated in five years, and the Buddhist priests were the main recipients of the gifts. After this the pilgrim was allowed to return to his native land.

Harsha's Death.

Harsha died in 646 or 647. He was a great king, made greater by Bāṇa and Hiuan-Tsang. A worshipper of Śiva and the Sun, he distinctly leaned towards Buddhism in the later years of his life and forbade the slaughter of animals in the land. Three dramas of fair literary merit, the *Ratnāvalī*, the *Priyadarśikā* and the *Nāgānanda*, are ascribed to him, but may be the work of some court-poet. Hiuan-Tsang thus describes Harsha:—

The reigning king is of the Vaiśya caste. His name is Harshavardhana. A commission of officers

hold the land. After six years of warfare he had subdued the Five Indies (*i.e.*, India). Having thus enlarged his territory, he increased his forces; he had 60,000 war elephants and 1,00,000 cavalry. After thirty years his arms reposed, and he governed everywhere in peace.[2] He then practised to the utmost the rules of temperance, and sought to plant the tree of religious merit to such an extent that he forgot to sleep or to eat. He forbade the slaughter of any living thing or flesh as food throughout the Five Indies on pain of death without pardon. He built on the banks of the river Ganges several thousand *stupas*, each about 100 feet high; in all the highways of the towns and villages throughout India he erected hospitals, provided with food and drink, and stationed there physicians, with medicines for travellers and poor persons round about, to be given without any stint.

Accounts of Hiuan-Tsang. "Harsha."

If it was necessary to transact state business, he employed couriers who continually went and returned. If there was any irregularity in the manners of the people of the cities, he went amongst them. He divided each day into three portions. During the first he occupied himself on matters of government; during the second he practised himself in religious devotion without interruption. So that the day was not sufficiently long. From these facts it appears that Harsha was a conscientious ruler and was actuated by noble ideas.

Hiuan-Tsang was well impressed with the people of India and their character. Describing the Indians,

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2 Another translation is: 'reigned in peace for thirty years without raising a weapon.'

he makes the following remarks: Although they are naturally light-minded, yet they are upright and honourable. In money matters they are without craft. They are not deceitful or treacherous in their conduct. In their rules of government there is remarkable rectitude, whilst in their behaviour there is much gentleness and sweetness.

The People.

When the laws are broken or the power of the ruler violated, then the matter is clearly sifted and the offenders imprisonment. There is no infliction of corporal punishment; they are simply left out to die, and are not counted among men. When the rules of property or justice are violated, or when a man fails in fidelity or filial piety, then they cut his nose or his ears off, or his hands and feet and expel him from the country or drive him out into the desert wilds. For other faults, except these, a small payment of money will redeem the punishment. Then Hiuan-Tsang goes on to mention that four kinds of ordeals were used to detect the offender—water, fire, weight and poison.

Administration of Justice.

'As the administration of the government is founded on benign principles, the executive is simple. The families are not entered on registers, and the people are not subject to forced labour. The taxes on the people are light, and the personal service required of them is moderate.'

Government.

'Those who cultivate the royal estates pay a sixth part of the produce as tribute. The merchants who engage in commerce come and go in carrying out their transactions. The river passages and the road barriers

Economic Conditions.

are open on payment of small toll. In fact they always barter in their commercial transactions, for they have no gold and silver coins.[3]'

'With respect to the division of families, there are four classifications. The first is called the Brahmana, men of pure conduct. They guard themselves in religion, live purely and observe the most correct principles. The second is called Kṣhatriya, the royal caste. For ages they have been the governing class, they apply themselves to virtue and kindness. The third is called Vaiśyas, the merchant class. They engage in commercial exchange and they follow profit at home and abroad. The fourth is called Śūdra, the agricultural class; they labour in ploughing and tillage. A woman once married cannot take a second husband.'

Caste.

'Onions and garlics are little grown; and few persons eat them; if anyone uses them, they are expelled beyond the walls of the town. The most usual food is milk, butter, cream, soft sugar, sugar.candy, the oil of the mustard-seed, and all sorts of cakes made of corn are used as food. Fish, mutton, gazelle and deer they eat generally fresh, sometimes salted.'

'Their clothing is not cut or fashioned,[4] they mostly affect fresh-white garments; they esteem those of mixed colour or ornamented. Some of the men cut off their moustaches and have other odd customs.'

'They are very particular in their personal cleanli-

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3 This can be only taken to mean that gold and silver coins had only a restricted circulation.

4 Another translator has it as 'has no tailoring.'

ness and allow no remissness in this particular. All wash themselves before eating; they never use that which has been left over (from a former meal); they do not pass the dishes. After eating they cleanse their teeth with a willow stick and wash their hands and mouth.'

Cleanliness.

'The towns and villages have inner gates; the walls are wide and high; the streets and lanes are tortuous, and the roads winding. The thoroughfares are dirty and stalls arranged on both sides of the road with appropriate signs. Butchers, fishers, dancers, executioners, and scavenger, and so on, have their abode without the city. In coming and going these persons are bound to keep on the left side of the road till they arrive at their homes. . . . The walls (of buildings) are covered with lime and mud, mixed with cow's dung for purity.'

Towns and Residences.

Middle India[5] preserves the original character of the language in its integrity. Here the pronunciation is soft and agreeable, and like the language of the Devas. The pronunciation of the words is clear and pure, and fit as a model for all men.'

Language.

Though there were many educational institutions all over the land, by far the most important intellectual centre of the age was the monastery at Nālandā (Bargāon near Rajgir). The institution was built up by the royal patronage of several generations of kings. Hiuan-Tsang lived and

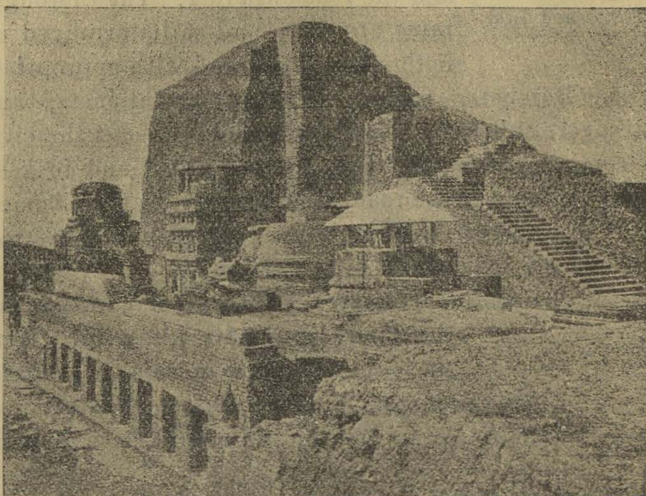
Nālandā.

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5 By 'Middle India,' Hiuan-Tsang means the Madhyadeśa (see Chapter IX). But, like Fa-Hien, he includes Bihar also under the term.

studied here for a long time and describes the Nālandā life in the following words:

'The priests, to the number of several thousands, are men of the highest ability and talent. Their distinction is very great at the present time, and there are many hundreds whose fame has rapidly spread through distant regions. Their conduct is pure and unblamable. They follow in sincerity the precepts of the moral law.



Ruins of Nālandā.

The rules of this convent are severe, and all the priests are bound to observe them. The countries of India respect them and follow them. The day is not sufficient for asking and answering questions. From morning till night they engage in discussion; the old and the young mutually help one another. Those who cannot discuss questions out of the *Tripitake* are little esteemed, and

are obliged to hide themselves for shame. Learned men from different countries, on this account, who desire to acquire quickly a renown in discussion, come here in multitudes to settle their doubts and then the streams (of their wisdom) spread far and wide. For this reason some persons usurp the name (of Nālandā students), and in going to and fro receive honour in consequence. If men of other quarters desire to enter and take part in the discussions, the keeper of the gate proposes some hard questions; many are unable to answer and retire. One must have studied deeply both old and new (books) before getting admission. Those students, therefore, who come here as strangers, have to show their ability by hard discussion; those who fail compared with *tjpse wjp* succeed are as seven or eight to ten'. It was supported by the revenue of hundred villages. The most distinguished Buddhist scholars of tht age, Gunamati, Sthirmati, Jinamitra. etc., were teachers in this university. Though primarily a Buddhist institution, it was not altogether sectarian in character, for there was provision for teaching other philosophies as well. Diplomas were not granted as is done in our day but the names of famous scholars were written on white on the lofty gateways. The motto of the University was: "Conquer wrath by forgiveness, conquer a bad man by good deeds, conquer a miser by giving him more, and conquer a liar by truth."

Buddhism.

Much more than in the time of Fa-Hien, Buddhism had definitely decayed in the time of Hiuan-Tsang. In the North-West the ravages of the Hūna hordes had devastated the monasteries, and in the south Jainism had gained the upper hand. In the east Buddhism was still very popular,

though even there Hiuan-Tsang found a remarkably large number of Brahmanical temples.

Hiuan-Tsang found about two millions of monks in India, the number excluding such vague terms as 'tens', 'hundreds', 'myriads', etc. Such a large number of monks in the days of the decline of Buddhism indicates that the toll which Buddhism had levied on Indian manhood and womanhood was heavy indeed.

Hiuan-Tsang endeared himself to the members of the institution and was fondly remembered long after he had left the place. Several years after his return to China, Prajñadeva, a monk of Nālandā, sent him a pair of clothes, saying: 'The *Upāsakas* every day go on in offering you their bows and salvation. Now, we all together send you a pair of white clothes to show you that in our hearts we have not forgotten you. The way (to China) is long; therefore do not take into account the smallness of the present, and we wish that you accept it.'

CHAPTER XIII

ASCENDENCY OF KANAUJ

After Harsha, Northern India once more became the scene of anarchy, and it is not possible to construct a connected history with the available data. A few isolated episodes are all that may be noted.

Arjuna.

Harsha's minister Arjuna usurped the throne left vacant by his master's death, and for some unknown reason attacked Wang-Hiuen-Tse, the Chinese envoy at his court. This offended the Tibetan king, Srong-bstam Sagam-po (an ally of the Chinese Emperor), who came down upon India, conquered Tirhut and made Arjuna a captive. In the seventh and eighth centuries the Tibetan kings acted as overlords of Nepal.

The Later Guptas.

Mādhava Gupta of the Later Gupta dynasty died soon after the death of Harsha and was succeeded by his son Ādityasena who became a king of great power. He assumed imperial titles and his empire included Bengal and Bihar (*c.* 675). But his successors, Deva Gupta III, Vishṇu Gupta and Jīvita Gupta II, were weak princes who allowed the empire of Ādityasena to decay.

Yaśovarman.

A king of this dynasty, probably Jīvita Gupta II, was defeated by Yaśavarman who had made himself master of Kanauj in the first half of the eighth century. Yaśovarman sent an expedition against Bengal and Bihar; it proved successful in spite of the stubborn resistance offered to it by

when, towards the end of the eighth century A.D., the people selected Gopāla as their king, who became the founder of the illustrious Pala dynasty of Bengal. His son Dharma-Pāla (*c.* 790—813) was a very powerful monarch, who defeated Indrāyudha of Kanauj, a successor of Yaśovarman, and placed his own nominee Chakrāyudha on the throne. He then conquered the mountainous districts of the United Provinces and thus carved out a very big empire for himself. But his successors were not to live long.

The Pratihāras.

The Pratihāra Rajputs, who claimed descent from the Solar Kṣhattriya race, formed a dynasty which ruled in Malwa from *c.* 750.[2] The ambitions of Vatsarāja, the fourth king of the line, and of his son Nāgabhaṭa II, led them to the north shortly after Dharma Pāla.

The Tripatite Struggle.

Thus there was a scramble for the acquisition of *Mahodaya-śrī* or the splendour of Kanauj between the Pratihāras of Malwa and the Pālas of Bengal. The situation was further complicated by the appearance on the scene of two Rāshtrakūta princes of the Deccan, Dhruva (*c.* 780—793) and his son Govinda III (*c.* 793—814). It is needless to follow the details of the rapid succession of events; it will suffice to say that by 808 Govinda III defeated Nāgabhaṭa the Pratihāra, Dharma Pāla of Bengal and Chakrāyudha, the latter's vassal at Kanauj. But the Rāshtrakūta occupation of Northern India came to an end under the weak successors of Govinda. Kanauj finally became the possession of the Pratihāras, who

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2 The original capital of the Pratihāras was probably Ujjain and not Bhīnmal in Rajputana as was previously thought. It is generally held that the Pratihāras were the ruling clan of the Gurjaras, a

shortly after this event, transferred their capital to Kanauj, to get the full honour of holding the imperial city of Northern India.

Bhoja I (c. 835—890), the grandson of Nāgabhaṭa II, and his son Mahendrapāla I (c. 890—910) were the greatest kings of the dynasty. We do not know the details of their military campaigns; but the distribution of their inscriptions make it clear that their empire extended from the Eastern Punjab right up to the northern districts of Bengal. The inclusion of the latter province shows that they had, temporarily at least, made much headway against their imperial rivals, the Pālas of Bengal.

After Mahendrapāla we are faced with a confusion in the chronology, but it seems that the next king was Mahīpāla I (c. 910—943), who was the patron of the poet Rājaśekhara, the author of numerous works in Prākrit. During his reign the conflict between the Pratihāras and the Rāshtrakūtas again came to a head. Indra III of the latter dynasty (c. 914—7), like his ancestors Dhruva and Govinda III, again turned to the north and deposed Mahīpāla. Fortunately for the Pratihāras there was internal dissension among the Rāshtrakūtas which diverted their attention from the north, so that Mahipala got back his throne with the help of his feudatories.

The Rāshtrakūtas again.

After Mahīpāla there were several generations of kings, but the prestige of the Pratihāras was gone. The

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foreign tribe who entered India with the Hūnas. But the connection of the Pratihāras with the Gurjaras has been recently called in question by some historians, who ascribe to them a native origin.

Downfall.

feudatory chiefs declared their independence one by one, till at length the Pratihāra kingdom extended hardly beyond Ganges-Jumna Doab.

Another shock to the Pratihāra power was given by Mahmud of Ghazni, who invaded Mathura and Kanauj in 1018 in the reign of Rājyapāla. Rājyapāla was succeeded by Trilochanapāla, the last known king of the Pratihāra dynasty. After him Kanauj again and again fell a prey to the arms of different kings, till it was occupied by Chandradeva, who founded the Gahaḍavāla dynasty in the last quarter of the eleventh century and revived the imperial traditions of Kanauj.

Genealogy of the Pratiharas

THE SOLAR RACE

- Nāgabhaṭa (c. 750)
- Devarāja
  - Vatsaraja (c. 783)
    - Nāgabhaṭa II (c. 815)
      - Rāmabhadra
        - Bhoja I (c. 835—90)
          - Mahendrapāla (c. 890—910)
            - Bhoja II (c. 910—2)
            - Mahīpāla (c. 912—43)
              - Mahendrapāla II (c 945)
                - Vināyakapāla (c. 953)
              - Devapāla (c. 948)
                - Mahīpāla II (c. 954)
                  - Vatsarāja II (c. 955)
              - Vijayapāla (c. 960)
                - Rājyapāla (c, 1018)
                  - Trilochanapāla (c. 1027)
                    - Yashapāla (c. 1037).

CHAPTER XIV

THE NORTHERN KINGDOMS

A. Northern India

Vāsudeva, the descendant of Kanishka, is the last Kushān king known to us. But even after the Yue-chis had lost their Indian possessions they continued to rule Afghanistan probably under the title of Sāhī. Though the Sassānian emperors of Persia tried every now and then to impose their authority on them, and the Hūna inroads of the fifth and sixth centuries diminished their power, the Hinduized Sāhīs continued to maintain their hold on Afghanistan.

The Sāhīs of the Punjab.

But from the seventh century the Sāhīs had to face a new danger from the rising Muslim power in the west, which ultimately occupied Kabul in 870, and forced the Sāhīs to migrate to the Punjab. In the following years the Mohammedans of Afghanistan continued to raid the Punjab again and again, till Subuktgin (977—999) definitely invaded the territory of Jayapāla (*c.* 985—1001), who now held the Punjab. Jayapāla organized a confederacy of the Hindu chiefs of Delhi, Ajmer, Kanauj and Kalanjar and proceeded towards Ghazni. But he was defeated and forced to yield his western districts to the Muslims.

Jayapāla.

Mahmūd, the son of Subuktgin, again invaded the territory of Jayapāla in 1000 and imprisoned him. Jaya-

pāla was subsequently released, but rather than continue an ignoble existence, he committed suicide, leaving the throne to his son Ānandapāla.

Ānandapāla.

Ānandapāla (*c.* 1001—1013) had again and again to face Mahmūd, who plundered an devastated his territories. Early in his reign he tried to organize the Hindu powers against Mahmūd, but met with no success. He was succeeded by Trilochanapāla (*c.* 1013—21), who fought a severe battle with Mahmūd, but fared no better than his father. With him the Sāhī dynasty came to virtual end.

The Gahaḍavālas of Kanauj and Benares.

While the last Pratihāras were still ruling, the empire of Kanauj began to fall to pieces, as the provincial governors assumed independent rôle. In the middle of the eleventh century Kanauj was subjected to the invasions of the Yamini Sultans of Ghazni and Lahore, as well as of the rulers of Central India, the Paramāras and Kalachuris, who temporarily occupied the Doab. Chandradeva (*c.* 1085—1100), a man of plebeian origin, seems to have begun his career as a subordinate to the Muslim rulers, but later on became independent. He established his mastery over the whole of the United Provinces and founded the Gahaḍavāla dynasty of Kanauj and Benares. The most powerful king of the dynasty was Govindchandra (*c.* 1114—60) who successfully resisted the invasions of Bengal as well as an aggression of the Muslims upon Benares. He wrested a portion of Western Bihar from the Pālas and maintained friendly relations with the Chola kings of the Far South.

Govindachandra

Jayachchandra.

In the reign of his grandson Jayachchandra (c. 1170—93) events of great moment were taking place in the west. The kings of Ghazni gave way before another Turkish horde led by Muhammad of Ghor, who, unlike his predecessors, wanted a permanent empire in India. In 1192 he swept away the Chahumāna rulers of Delhi in the second battle of Tarāin and advanced upon the Gahaḍavālas next year. Jayachchandra was killed on the battle-field and the Muslims won the victory without much difficulty. The Ganges-Jumna Doab passed out of Hindu hands.

The Chahumānas of Sambhar.

The Chahumānas had more than one branch ruling in Rajputana. About the middle of the twelfth century Vigrahapāla (IV) of this line brought under his subjection the different branches of the dynasty and is said to have conquered Delhi from the Tomaras. His nephew was the celebrated Prithvīrāja, made immortal by the poet Chand Bardai in the *Prithvīrāja Rāsau*, an epic in old Hindi. Therein he is said to have entered into hostile relations with Jayachchandra, the prince of Kanauj, by carrying away his daughter, Saṁyogitā in a *Svayamvara*. Though the details of the story are open to doubt, it seems that the relations of Prithvīrāja and Jayachchandra were far from cordial and united resistance to the Muslim invaders was out of the question. In 1191 Prithvīrāja defeated the Muslims at the battle of Tarāin, the last great victory that the Hindus achieved. But a year later the position was reversed and Prithvīrāja was killed. The conquest of Northern India by the Muslims was now only a question of time.

Prithvīrāja.

B. Central India and Gujarat

The Kalachuris of Dahālā (Northern C. P. and the adjoining area) began their independent career in the beginning of the tenth century under Kokkalla I with their capital at Tripuri (Tewar near Jubbulpore). The early Kalachuris were connected by a series of marriage alliances. One of the sons of Kokkalla founded a separate dynasty at Ratnapura in the eastern part of the Central Provinces. Yuvarāja I, the grandson of Kokkalla, came to the throne in the second quarter of the tenth century and made conquests up to Bengal, Gujarat and the Kanarese districts of the South.

The Kalachuris of Tripuri.

Yuvarāja I.

One of the most powerful kings of the dynasty was Gāṅgeya Vikramāditya who reigned in the first half of the eleventh century and restored the glories of the dynasty. He is definitely known to have conquered the Ganges-Jumna Doab after the Pratihāras of Kanauj, whose final destruction may be ascribed to him. He is said to have been fond of residing at Allahabad, which he had acquired by dint of his prowess.

Gāṅgeya.

The prestige of the Kalachuris thus established was fully maintained by his son Karṇa (*c.* 1042) who held Kanauj and is credited with an all-India conquest. He deposed Bhoja I, the Paramāra king of Malwa and temporarily held the latter's kingdom. He also defeated the kings of Bundelkhand, Bengal, Gujarat and some kings of the south. The last part of his reign, however, was not as brilliant, for he lost some of his possessions, notably Malwa.

Karṇa.

Under the successors of Karṇa the Kalachuri empire began to break to pieces. Kanauj was lost to the Gahaḍavālas, and the Kalachuris again came to be confined to their proper limits, *viz.*, the Jubbulpore area. The dynasty continued till *c.* 1200, when it was exterminated by the Yadavas of Devagiri.

Downfall.

The Paramāras believed themselves to be Rajputs born out of the sacrificial fire-pit of the sage Vasishtha. They were set over Malwa, probably as feudatories, in the beginning of the ninth century, but, like all other feudatory houses, soon established their independence. The centre of their government was Dhārā (Dhar, C. I.), though Ujjain continued to be important. The Paramāras carried on continuous warfare with the neighbouring kingdoms, and their power extended up to the Godavari in the south.

The Paramāras of Malwa.

The Paramāra power was brought to glory by Vākpatirāja II, surnamed Munja (*c.* 970—90), who defeated Yuvarāja II, the Kalachuri king, annexed his territories and also brought to submission the rulers of Gujarat and Marwar. But his protracted hostilities with the Chālukyas of the Deccan ended in disaster, for he was imprisoned and beheaded.

Munja.

The most famous king of the line was Bhoja (*c.* 997—1052), the nephew of Vākpati. He defeated the kings of Gujarat, Orissa and Tripuri and even held Kanauj for some time. He was a party to the confederacy organised by Ānandapāla of the Punjab to check Mahmud of Ghazni. But in his old age he was confronted with a combined attack

Bhoja.

of Bhīma, the Chālukya king of Gujarat, and Karṇa the Kalachuri king of Tripuri, and died on the battlefield.

Both Vākpati and Munja were real patrons of Sanskrit learning and letters. Bhoja is credited with the composition of more than twenty works on most varied subjects. The best poets of the age belonged to his court. and he is said to have founded a college at his capital, Dhārā. The royal court was always bustling with literary activity, in which the king himself took no mean part. The Paramāras also built many temples in their kingdom.

His Successors.

After Bhoja the Paramāra power began to decline. Though the subordinate branches tried to retrieve the fallen fortunes, the process of decay continued, till Iltutmish fell upon Malwa in 1226 and the subsequent years. The final Muslim conquest of Malwa took place under Ala-ud-Din Khilji in 1305.

The Chandelas of Bundelkhand.

The Chandelas (Chandels), a Rajput clan of Jejākabhukti (Bundelkhand) definitely broke away from the Pratihāra empire under Yaśoverman in the first half of the tenth century A.D. The chief towns of the Chandelas were Mahoba, Kalanjar and Khajurāho, all of which they beautified with fine buildings. The most powerful Chandela king was Dhanga

Dhanga.

(*c.* 950—1000), son of Yaśovarman, whose kingdom extended to the Narmada, the Jumna and even Benares and who built the famous temples at Khajurāho. He became a member of the league which was organised by Jayapala of the Punjab to resist the invasion of Subuktgin. Ganda, the son of

Dhanga, had to surrender the fort of Kalanjar in 1023. After this the Chandela power was overshadowed by the powerful Kalachuri kings of Tripurī.

Kīrtivarman.

But the Chandela power rose to prominence again under Kīritivarman (*c.* 1065—1100) who defeated his Kalachuri contemporary Karṇa. Another powerful king of the dynasty was Madanavarman (*c.* 1128—1165), who also is known to have made wide conquests.

Decline.

But the Chandela power did not last much longer. Paramardin (*c.* 1165—1205) known in folklore as Parmāla was defeated by Prithvīrāja Chahumāna in 1182 and his kingdom was conquered by Qutb-ud-Din Aibak in 1203. Local Chandela chieftains continued to rule till the sixteenth century.

The Chālukyas of Gujarat.

The province of Gujarat broke away from the Pratihāra empire in the tenth century and became independent under the Chālukya (Solankī) chief Mūlarāja I, with his capital at Anahilapataka (Patan in Northern Gujarat). Bhīma I of this dynasty, who had the throne in the first half of the eleventh century, was a powerful king who directed his arms against a host of enemies and was a party in the final war against Bhoja of Malwa. In 1026 Mahmud of Ghazni invaded his kingdom and sacked the temple of Somanatha where immense riches had been accumulated.

Siddharāja.

Jayasiṁha Siddharāja (*c.* 1100—1145), the grandson of Bhīma, annexed Malwa and held it for some time. The next king Kumārapāla (*c.* 1145—72) vastly extended his dominions and reconquered Malwa, which, however, was again lost

in the reign of his successor Ajayapāla (*c.* 1172—76). Kumārapāla was a follower of Jainism and was the patron of Hemachandra Suri, the famous Jaina teacher and author of several works.

The Vāghela Chālukyas.

After a short time the Chālukya power began to decline, and, as usual, the provincial governors grew powerful. Lavanaprasāda, who belonged to the Vāghela branch of the Chālukyas, became the most powerful of them in *c.* 1200. The next king was Virādhapāla, not yet formerly independent, whose ministers Vastupāla and Tejapāla built the marvellously beautiful temples of Mt. Abu and Girnar.

Virādhapāla's son Vīsaladeva (*c.* 1242—63) was the first member of his line to rule about half a century after him, when Gujarat was conquered by Ala-ud-Din Khilji.

Other principalities.

Besides these principal dynasties, there were other lines of independent chiefs, such as the Guhilas of Medapāṭa (Mewar), the Kachchhapaghatas of Gopādri (Gwalior), etc.

C. Bengal and Bihar

The Pālas.

We have already read of the pitiable condition of Bengal in the seventh and eighth centuries and of the accession of Gopāla in the latter half of the eighth century. The selection of Gopāla proved to be happy, for he was a powerful ruler who gave the people what they wanted most—a stable government and a powerful dynasty. The

exploits of his son Dharmapāla (*c.* 780—813) have been mentioned before. To recapitulate, he conquered Magadha, defeated Indrāyudha, the king of Kanauj, and placed Chakrāyudha, probably a relative of the defeated king, on the Kanauj throne. But he himself was defeated by the Pratihāras and Rāshtrakūtas and was deprived of his western possessions.

Devapala.

His son Devapāla (*c.* 813—855) claims to have made very wide conquests in all directions. There is no doubt that in his reign the Pāla power extended over Bihar and Bengal He is said to have carried on campaigns in the Himalayas, the Vindhyas, Assam, Orissa, the South and the West; but these conquests must have been temporary and did not result in any annexation. He granted the revenues of five villages for the up-keep of a Buddhist monastery at Nālandā, built by Bālaputra, the king of Sumatra and Java.

Kambojas.

Devapāla was succeeded by a set of weak rulers who had to yield up a portion of Bihar and Northern Bengal to the Pratihāra emperors Bhoja and Mahendrapāla. In the reign of the eighth king Vigrahapāla II the Kāmbojas (possibly Tibetans) compelled the king to flee away, leaving the country in the hands of the enemies. The next king Mahīpāla II (*c.* 1005—1055) tried to revive the past glories of the dynasty. He not only drove away the Kāmbojas but added Bihar and Benares to his empire. But he suffered defeat at the hands of Rājendra-Chola I, the Chola king of the Far South, who defeated many other princes of Eastern India.

Mahīpāla II.

Nothing could now keep together the tottering fabric of the Pāla empire. The dynasty dragged on a miserable existence in Northern Bengal and Bihar even after the Kaivarta rebellion in the middle of the eleventh century organized by one Divvoka, till the Pāla power was extinguished in Bengal by the Senas in the middle of the twelfth century.

Decay.

The Pāla dynasty thus held East India for four centuries with its capital at Gauḍa the ruins of which may still be seen near Malda (Bengal). The kings were all Buddhists and patronised art and letters. The state cared much for irrigation, as is shown by many tanks in the Dīnājpur district. The kings maintained relations with Tibet and the Eastern Archipelago.

From inscriptions we know of the existence of a Śūra dynasty in Western Bengal in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Traditions embodied in later works mention a king named Ādiśūra, who is said to have invited five Brahmanas, attended by five Kayasthas, from Kanauj, in order to teach the local people orthodox Vedic rites. The dates assigned to Ādiśūra range from the eighth to the twelfth century, but as he is not known from any other source and some scholars doubt his very existence, it is certain that whatever historical germs the tradition may contain, it cannot be accepted in its entirety.

The Śūras.

The Senas, who wrested Bengal from the Pālas, seem to have originally belonged to the South whence they migrated to Rāḍha (Western Bengal). They might have been originally Brahmanas, but came to be regarded as

The Senas.

Kshatriyas by virtue of their holding the sceptre. The dynasty was founded by Sāmanta Sena in *c.* 1050.

Vijaya Sena. Vijaya Sena, the grandson of Sāmanta Sena, sent a naval expedition up to the Ganges and broke whatever was left of the Pāla power in Bihar. His son was Ballāla Sena who seems to have reigned in the middle of the twelfth century. He is reputed to be the author of some Sanskrit works but is still more famous in the social history of Bengal for having introduced Kulīnism (see Chapter XVII) among the highest castes and degraded and elevated some other castes.

Ballala-Sena.

Ballāla was succeeded by his son Lakshmana Sena, who might have come to the throne in the last quarter of the twelfth century. An era of A.D. 1110 goes by the name of Lakshmana Sena; how it came to be associated with his name is one of the unsolved problems of Indian history. Some historians, however, place his accession in that year and push back the dates of his ancestors accordingly.

Lakshmana Sena

Lakshmana Sena seems to have led successful expeditions in the west up to Allahabad and also far into the south. He was a patron of letters, and one of his court-poets was the famous Jayadeva, the author of the *Gīta-Govinda.*

Eastern India now attracted the eyes of the Muslims. About 1200, Mohammad, son of Bakhtiyar, fell upon Nudiah, which might have been one of the capitals of Lakshmana, and compelled him to take boat for Eastern Bengal. There the Sena power continued for some time more.

Muslim Invasion

D. Other Kingdoms

The history of Assam seldom comes into relationship with that of India, nor can it be worked out in details from the sources at our disposal. When Harshavardhana was ruling at Kanauj in the seventh century, Kāmarupa (Assam) with its capital at Pragjyotisha (? Gauhati) was held by his ally Bhāskaravarman. Shortly after him a new dynasty seems to have been founded by Śalāstambha (*c.* 650—800). Then the throne passed to Prālamba and his successors (*c.* 800—1000). After that dynasty Assam was ruled by Brahmapāla and his descendants till *c.* 1100. After a short time when Assam was ruled by Vaidyadeva, who began his career as a feudatory of the Pālas, fortune favoured Bhāskara whose descendants ruled till *c.* 1206. The Senas of Bengal seem to have held a brief sway over a part of the province. In the thirteenth century Assam was invaded by the Ahoms, a section of the Shan tribe, who held the province till it was conquered by the British in 1825.

Assam.

In the mediaeval age Assam was a great place of Tantric or Śākti worship. Kāmākhyā (near Gauhati), which still contains a temple of the goddess of that name, came to be regarded as the home of witchcraft and nefarious magic.

The history of Nepala (or Nepal) is given in local books of genealogy, but they are unreliable in many respects and are to be supplemented and rectified by reference to inscriptions. In old times Nepal used many different eras,

Nepal.

but as their epochs are not definitely known, there is a great deal of uncertainty about the chronology.

Nepal seems to have adopted the Indian culture in the early centurie of the Christian era. In the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudra Gupta, Nepal figures as one of his frontier kingdoms The Lichchhavis held the country from the fourth century A.D. But the Nepalese contemporary of Harshavardhana was Amśuvarma, who held the land as a feudatory of the Tibetan king Srong-lestam-Sgam-po, who married the daughter of Amśuvarman After him the Tibetan influence continued for a time, but ultimately the Lichchhavis re-asserted themselve and continued to rule till the eighth century

We get connected history again from the eleventh century. During this period Nepal cam to be regarded as a stronghold of Mahāyāna Buddhism; this common tie intimately connected Nepal with Bengal. In the Buddhist annals of the land, the name of Atīśa, a Buddhist teacher from Bengal, occupies a high position. Numerous manuscripts of Buddhist texts have been discovered in Nepal and many are still lying unexplored.

Kashmir.

We have a connected history of Kasmira (Kashmir) from the earliest times to A.D. 1150 in the *Rājataranginī* of Kalhaṇa, a work that occupies a unique position in Sanskrit literature. But Kalhaṇa's account of the earlier age is more or less legendary in character, and we reach the historical period only in the middle of the ninth century.

When Hiuen Tsang visited Kashmir in A.D. 631, it was held by Durlabhavardhana. For the first half

of the eighth century A.D. Kashmir was ruled by Lalitāditya-Muktāpīḍa whom we have already met before. He conquered Kanauj and Bengal, sent successful expeditions across the Hindukush and gained success against the Tibetans.

Lalitāditya.

From 855 to 933 princes of the Utpala dynasty ruled over the valley. The first king was Avantivarman (855—83) who was noted for his patronage of learning and works of irrigation, one of which was the regulation of the waters of Jhelum. After the Utpalas there was a short rule of ten years (939—49) by Vīradeva and his descendants, till the throne passed to Abhinava and his successors (949—1003). The dynasty occupies a prominent position in the chronicles of Kashmir, as it contained the masterful figure of Diddā, the greatest queen of India. All through the reign of her husband, sons and grandson, she directed the affairs of the State and then herself assumed the reins of government for about a quarter of a centu (980—1003). In spite of her many defects her reign was on the whole beneficial to the country and when she died she bequeathed the throne to the son of her brother, who founded the Lohara dynasty (1003—1171). It was at the time of Jayasimha of this dynasty that Kalhaṇa composed his famous work.

The Utpalas

Vīradeva.

Abhinava.

Diddā.

The Loharas.

From 1339 Kashmir was held by a line of local Mohammedan rulers, till it was conquered by Akbar in 1586.

Muslim Rule.

Orissa did not form one unit in ancient days. It contained several political divisions, such as Utkala, Oḍra, Kalinga, etc. There were many powers holding sway over different parts of the region, such as the Somavaṃśīns of Śrīpura (modern Sirpur, Raipur district, C.P.), the Karas of Tosali (probably in Puri district), the Bhañjas of Mayūrbhañj and the neighbouring states, etc. Their mutual chronology has not yet been satisfactorily established, as most of them dated their inscriptions in regnal years and not in some well known era. Of them, the Eastern Gangās of Kalinga obtained some prominence. They were most probably connected with the Western Gangās of Mysore. They established an era in Orissa in *c.* 500, but sank into insignificance after a century and a half. They again came to notice in the eleventh century under Vajrahasta. His grandson Avanta Varman Chodagangā (*c.* 1076—1147) extended the Gangā dominion from the Ganges to the Godavari. He began the construction of the great temple of Jagannath at Puri.

Orissa.

The Eastern Gangās.

At the beginning of the thirteenth century Orissa attracted the attention of the Muslims, who repeatedly invaded the provinces. The final Muslim annexation, however, took place in 1568.

APPENDIX

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

A. The Gahaḍavālas of Kanauj and Benares

YAŚOVIGRAHA

Mahīchandra

1. Chandra (c. 1085 - 1100)
2. Madanapāla (c. 1100—10)
3 Govindachandra (c. 1110—60)
4 Vijayachandra (c 1160—70)
5 Jayachandra (c. 1170—94)
6. Harischandra (c. 1194—1200)

B. The Chahumānas of Śākambharī

1. ARṆORĀJA

3. Prithvīrāja I (c 1165—70)
2. Vigraharāja-Vīsaladeva (c. 1150—65)
4. Someśvara (c. 1170--80)
   5. Prithvīrāja II (c. 1180—1193)

C. THE KALACHURIS OF TRIPURĪ

1. KOKKALLA I (c. 900)
   - 2. Prasiddhadhavala (c. 910—20)
     - 3. Bālāharsha
     - 4. Yuvaraja I (c. 930—5)
       - 5. ? (c. 935—40)
       - 6. Lakshmarāja (c 940—50)
         - 7 Śamkaragaṇa (c. 950—70)
         - 8. Yuvarāja II (c. 970—90)
           - 9. Kokkalla II (c. 990—1010)
             - 10. Gāngeya (c. 1010—41)
               - 11. Karṇa (c. 1041—1072)
                 - 12. Yaśahkarna (c. 1072—1130)
                   - 13. Gayākarṇa (c. 1130—53)
                     - 14. Narasimha (c. 1153—65)
                     - 15. Jayasimha (c. 1165—1178)
                       - 16. Vijayasimha (c 1178—1200)

D. THE PARAMĀRAS OF MALWA

1. UPENDRA-KRISHNARĀJA (*c*. 800—35)

2. Vairisimha (*c*. 835—60)

3. Sīyaka I (*c*. 860—90)

4. Vākpati I (*c*. 890—15)

5. Vairisimha (*c*. 915—40)

6. Sīyaka II (*c*. 940—70)

7. Vākpati II Munja (970—90) 8. Sindhurāja (*c*. 990—97)

9. Bhoja I (*c*. 997—1052)

10. Jayasimha I (*c*. 1052—60)

11. Udayāditya (*c*. 1060—86)

12. Lakshma (*c*. 1086—93) 13. Naravarman (*c*. 1093—1120)

14. Yaśovarman (*c*. 1120—44)

15. (A) Jayavarman (*c*. 1144—48) Lashmivarman

16. Vindhyavarman (*c* 1148—78) Harischandra

17. Subhaṭavarman (*c*. 1178—1203) 19. Devapāla (*c*. 1215—40)

18. Arjunavarman I (*c*. 1203—1216)

20. Jaitugi (*c*. 1240—55) 21. Jayavarman (*c*. 1255—70)

22. Jaysimha II (*c*. 1270—85)

23. Arjunavarman II (*c*. 1285—91)

24. Bhoja II (*c*. 1291—1302)

25. Malhaka

26. Jayasimha III (*c*. 1303—18)

E. The Chandellas of Bundelkhand

1. NANNUKA
2. Vākpati
3. Jayasakti
4. Vijayaśakti
5. Rāhíla
6. Harsha
7. Yaśovarman
8. Dhanga (*c.* 950—1000)
9. Gaṇḍa (*c.* 1000—20)
10. Vidyādhara (*c.* 1020—35)
11. Vijayapāla (*c.* 1035—50)
12. Devavarman (*c.* 1050—65)
13. Kritivarman (*c.* 1065—1100)
14. Sallakshanavarman (*c.* 1100—10)
15. Jayavarman (1110—20)
16. Prithvivarman (*c.* 1120—28)
17. Madanavarman (*c.* 1128—65)
Yaśovarman
18. Paramardin (*c.* 1165—1205)
19. Trailokyavarman (*c.* 1205—50)
20. Vīravarman (*c.* 1250—87)
21. Bhojavarman

F. The Chālukyas of Gujarat

1. RĀJI

2. Mūlarāja (c. 970—1000)

3. Chāmunda (c. 1000—10)

4. Vallabha (c. 1010—20)   5. Durlabha (c. 1020—24)

6. Bhima I (c. 1024—60)

7. Karṇa Trailokyamalla (c. 1060—1100)

8. Jayasimha Sidhharāja (c. 1100—45)

9. Kumārapāla (c. 1145—70)

10. Ajayapāla (c. 1170—76)

11. Mūlarāja II (c. 1176—78)

12. Bhīma II (c. 1178—1239)

13. Jayantasimha

14. Tribhuvanapāla

G. The Chālukya-Vāghelas of Gujarat

1. ARṆORĀJA

2. Lavanaprasāda (c. 1200—25)

4. Vīsaladeva (c. 1240—62)   Pratapamalla

5. Arjuna (c. 1262—70)

6. Sāranga (c. 1270—95)

H. The Pālas of Bengal and Bihar

1. GO-PĀLA I (*c.* 765—80)

2. Dharma-Pāla — Vak-Pāla

3. Deva-Pāla (*c.* 813—55) — Jayapāla

4. Vigrahapāla I or Sura-Pāla (*c.* 855—60)

5. Nārāyana-Pāla (*c.* 860—915)

6. Rājya-Pāla (*c.* 915—940)

7. Go-Pāla II (*c.* 940—1000)

8. Vigraha-Pāla II (*c.* 1000—1005)

9. Mahīpāla I (*c.* 1005—1055)

10. Naya-Pāla (*c.* 1055—72)

11. Vigraha-Pāla III (*c.* 1072—1100)

12. Māhī-Pāla II (*c.* 1100) — 13. Śūra-Pāla (*c.* 1102) — 14. Rāma-Pāla (*c.* 1102—1145)

15. Kumāra-Pāla (*c.* 1145—55) — 17. Madana-Pāla

16. Gopāla III — 18. Govinda-Pāla

19. Pala-Pāl.

I. The Senas of Bengal

1. SĀMANTA-SENA (*c.* 1050—75)
   |
2. Hemanta-Sena (*c.* 1075--97)
   |
3. Vijaya-Sena (*c.* 1097—1158)
   |
4. Ballāla-Sena (*c.* 1158—78)
   |
5. Lakshmana-Sena (1178—1200)

Mādhava-Sena   Viśvarūpa-Sena   Keśava-Sena.

N.B.—The relationship of two kings connected with dotted lines is not known.

The dates are approximately in all cases.

CHAPTER XV

THE DECCAN AND THE FAR SOUTH

A. Dynasties of the Deccan

The Chālukyas of Vatapi.

The Chālukyas came to power in *c.* 550, probably by defeating the Vākatakas. The first king was Pulakeśin I who made Vātāpi (modern Bādāmi in the Bijapur district, Hyderabad) his capital. His successors Kīrtivarman I (*c.* 565—97) and Marigaleśa (*c.* 597—609) were both very powerful rulers who placed the Chālukya power on a solid basis and annexed the whole of the Bombay Presidency and Hyderabad.

Pulakeśin II.

The latter was deposed and succeeded by Pulakeśin II (*c.* 609—42), who was the greatest ruler of the line. He overran the eastern parts of the Central Provinces, then known as Mahākośala or Southern Kośala, Orissa and the northern districts of the Madras Presidency. He then entered the very heart of the Pallava dominions and defeated the Pallava king Mahendravarman near Kanchi, the Pallava capital. He seems also to have annexed Karṇāṭa or the Kanarese districts from the Kadambas. In the east he placed his brother as ruler of Vengī, and thus came into existence the powerful line of the Eastern Chālukyas (see below). His great achievement was that he defeated his northern contemporary Harshavardhana of Kanauj. But in his old age he suffered a terrible defeat at the hands of Narasimha I the Pallava king, who took revenge by capturing and

destroying the Chālukya capital. Indeed, so severe was the defeat that there was no Chālukya king for a period of thirteen years (642—55).

The Chālukya power was brought back to existence by Vikramāditya I (*c.* 655—80). He and his successors Vinayāditya (*c.* 680—96), Vijayāditya (*c.* 696—733) and Vikramāditya II (*c.* 733—44) all had to fight the Pallavas. The last king Kīrtivarman II (*c.* 744—53) was deprived of his throne by the newly risen power of the Rāshtrakūtas.

Successors.

There was a subordinate branch of the Chālukyas in Gujarat. Pulakeśin, a prince of this line, repelled in *c.* 731 an invasion of the Arabs of Sind, who were advancing to reduce the Deccan.

Though there are evidences of local Rāshtrakūta dynasties in some parts of Berar in earlier times, their real history begins in 753 when Dantidurga overthrew the Chālukya king Kīrtivarman II. He was succeeded by his uncle Krishna I (*c.* 760—73), who led campaigns against the Eastern Chālukyas. The next important kings were Dhruva (*c.* 780—93) and his son Govinda III (*c.* 793—814), both of whom effected extensive conquests in the north. We have already seen how these two princes entered into the struggle for supremacy between Nāgabhata II the Pratihāra and Dharmapāla of Bengal about the possession of Kanauj and how they carried the day before them. However, the conquests were only of a temporary nature, as Govinda had soon to turn to the South.

The Rāshtrakūta of Manya-Kheta.

Krishna I.

Dhruva and Govinda III.

Amoghavarsha I

Govinda's son Amoghavarsha I (*c.* 814—880) was only five years of age when he came to the throne. During his reign there was trouble with the Eastern Chālukyas and the Pallavas. There was great internal turmoil as well, probably as a result of which Amoghavarsha abdicated many times during his long reign. He transferred his capital to Mānyakheta (modern Malkhed in Central Hyderabad); it is not definitely known what was the earlier capital.

Indra III.

During the reign of the next king Krishna (*c.* 880—914) the hereditary feud with the Eastern Chalukyas continued in which the Rāshtrakūtas did not gain any advantage. The reign of his grandson Indra III (*c.* 914—7) was of meteoric brilliance. Within a short period of three years he became a figure in the politics of northern India and deposed Mahīpāla, the Pratihāra king of Kanauj, thus emulating the feats of his forefathers Dhruva and Govinda III.

Krishna III.

The next important king was Krishna III (*c.* 939—68) who as a prince defeated the Gangās and the Kalachuris and seized some forts from the Chandelas. He also defeated the Chola king in 949. But under his weak successors the Rāshtrakūta power began to decline, till Karka II was deposed by Taila II, who restored the power of the Chalūkyas.

Kailasa temple.

Krishna I of this dynasty built at Ellora (North Hyderabad) the famous Kailaśa temple of Śiva. It is a huge building cut out of a single rock, every wall of which is elaborately carved with mythological scenes.

From *c*. 790 to 900 Gujarat was held by a subordinate branch founded by Indra, son of Dhruva, but after 900 it was ruled directly from Malkhed.

C. The Restored Chālukyas of Kalyāna

The Restored Chālukyas of Kalyāna.

Taila II (*c*. 973—977), the restorer of the Chālukya power, established himself at Kalyāna (modern Kalyaṇī, Central Hyderabad) and carried on successful wars against the Cholas of the Far South, the Chālukyas of Gujarat, the Kalachuris of Chedi and the Paramāras of Malwa. His son Satyāśraya (*c*. 977—1009), was defeated by the Chola emperor Rājarāja the Great. In 1052, Someśvara I (*c*. 1042—68) defeated Rājadhirāja Chola and proceeded to the north. He compelled the famous Bhoja of the Paramāra dynasty to flee for his life and completely broke the power of the Kalachuri king Karṇa, who had been once the virtual emperor of India.

Someśvara I.

Vikramāditya VI

The next important king was Vikramāditya VI (*c*. 1076—1126) who is credited with having successfully fought with the kings of Bengal, Malwa and the Far South. He is the hero of the *Vikramānka-Charita*, a historical poem composed by his court poet Bilhaṇa.

Vikramāditya was followed on the throne by successive generations of weak kings. In 1156, when Taila III was king, the greater portion of the Chālukya possessions was usurped by Bijjala, the general of the realm. In 1184, however, Someśvara IV succeeded in recovering the ancestral throne. But he

Kalachuria occupations.

could not maintain his power for any length of time; in 1190 his kingdom was appropriated by Bhillama, the Yādava king of Devagiri.

The reign of Bijjala the usu per is important in the religious history of southern India, inasmuch as it saw the rise of a new Saiva sect, the Lingayats, about whom we shall read later on.

The Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi.

Pulakesin II, the great king of the western Chalukya dynasty, despatched his younger brother Vishnuvardhana to conquer the eastern regions. Vishnuvardhana occupied Kalinga and Andhradesa, and established for himself a seat of viceroyalty at Vengi (modern Vegi in the Godavari district, Madras) in *c.* 615. He was succeeded by his son Jayasimha I (*c.* 633—63) who declared his independence when the main house was badly defeated by the Pallavas.

His Successors.

In the beginning of the eighth century there was a civil war for the throne and a consequent irregular succession. But in 709, the throne was seized by Vishnuvardhana III (*c.* 709—46), in whose reign the southern part of the kingdom was lost to the Pallavas. The reign of his son Vijayaditya I (*c.* 746—64) witnessed the overthrow of the western Chalukyas by the Rashtrakutas (see above), an event which had a serious effect on the eastern Chalukyas as well.

Vijayaditya II.

The next king Vshnuvardhana IV (*c.* 764—99) had to suffer an attack from the powerful Rashtrakuta king and purchased peace by surrendering himself to the invader. His son Vijayaditya II (*c.* 799—843) took upon himself the task of overthrowing the Rashtrakuta yoke. But

the Rashtrakuta Govinda III, the most dominating royal figure of his time, defeated him and placed his younger brother Bhima on the throne. However, Vijayaditya regained the throne after the death of Govinda (814) and took a successful revenge by temporarily dethroning Amoghavarsha, the successor of Govinda. His grandson Vijayaditya tried his steel with the Pallavas and helped the Chola king against the Pandyas. The country of the Western Gangas was also invaded, and the Rashtrakuta king Amoghavarsha was again defeated. He thus created a commotion in the south by his violent wars.

Weak Succession.

During the successive reigns that followed the hostility with the Rashtrakutas continued with varying results. After a quick change of hands and an interregnum of 27 years (976—1003), the throne passed to Saktivarman (1003—1015) and his brother Vimalāditya (*c.* 1015—1022). The latter's son was Rajraja I (*c.* 1022—64) who prepared a Telegu translation of the Mahabharata and married the daughter of the Chola king Rajendra.

Rajendra.

His son Rājendra came to the throne in *c.* 1064 but after a few years claimed and secured the Chola throne, which he occupied as Kulottunga I. Vengī was henceforth held by governors sent by the Chola emperors.

B. Far South

The Pallavas of Kanchi.

The Pallavas were formerly thought to be connected with the Pahlavas or Parthians, though there is nothing but a similarity of names to support this conclusion. The Pallava power was established at Kanchi (modern

Conjeeveram) in *c.* A.D. 250 by Bappa and his son Siva Skandavarman I; but the chronology of the earlier kings is nothing but confusion. Vishnugopa, a king of this line, was defeated by Samudra-Gupta in course of his southern campaigns. About 600 the dynasty came into great prominence under Mahendravarman I, who extended his territories at the expense of the Cholas. His son Narasimha I (*c.* 630—58) is famous in history as the builder of beautiful rock-cut temples at a place which he called Mamallapuram (modern Mahabalipuram, on the eastern coast to the south of Madras). He was at first defeated by the Chālukya king Pulakeśin I but in 642 himself defeated that king and made the Chālukya power non-existent for thirteen years. He helped the king of Ceylon to regain the throne which had been lost as a result of internal quarrels.

Mahendravarman I.

Narasimha I.

During the reigns that followed the war with the Chālukyas and their political successors the Rāshtrakūtas continued. In *c.* 800 the Rāshtrakūtas under Govinda III succeeded in establishing temporary suzerainty over the Pallavas. The Pallavas had also to meet a new rival power the Cholas, who came into prominence in the ninth century. Ultimately in *c.* 900 Aparājita the last Pallava ruler, was defeated and his territories were annexed by the Chola king Āditya I.

War with the Rāshtrakūtas.

Chola-occupation.

We have already seen that three kingdoms of the south, the Cholas, Cheras and Pāndyas, are mentioned in the inscriptions of Āśoka as independent kingdoms. The Cholas and

The Cholas.

the Pāndyas continued their independent existence through centuries of turmoil and drastic changes that took place in the north and the Deccan.

The people of the Far South developed vernacular learning and literature among themselves from very early times. There were richly endowed academies in the land and the literature they produced is known as the Saṅgam literature. The date of the Saṅgam age is uncertain, but very roughly it may be said to be the first two or three centuries of the Christian era. This literature acquaints us with the existence of two famous kings Karikāla and Kochchenganaṇam who are credited with wide conquests.

But the real history of the Cholas begins in the second quarter of the ninth century A.D. with Vijayāla (*c.* 850) who appears at first as a feudatory of the Pallavas near Tanjore. His son Āditya I (*c.* 875—907) and grandson Parāntaka (*c.* 907—953) reduced the Pallava power. The latter invaded the Pandya king of the south, who sought help from Ceylon but to no effect. In *c.* 950, however, the king himself met with reverses in Ceylon.

Vijayāla.

The next important king was Rājarāja the Great (*c.* 985—1014), who spread his arms far and wide. He reduced and captured the Pandya king of the south, and marched against the Chera king of the west. He crossed the sea and invaded Ceylon, as his inscription proudly states; he excelled Rama, as his powerful army crossed the sea by ships and burnt the king of Lankā. Satyāśraya, the king of the newly restored Chālukya line, felt his steel and placed his royal treasury at the feet of the con-

Rājarāja.

queror. The Cholas had also developed a powerful navy and sent expeditions to the Eastern Archipelago.

Rājendra I.

His son Rājendra I (*c.* 1014—1044) was the most powerful king of the dynasty, under whom the Chola power reached the pinnacle of its glory. The Pandya and Chera principalities were ruled by his governors. He sent one of his generals to the north; the general marched through Orissa and Mahākośala (south-eastern C. P.) and reached the Ganges, a unique achievement. To commemorate his northern victories upto the Ganges, he assumed the title of Garigaikonda. His navy sailed to Burma and Sumatra and temporarily occupied those lands. He built a new city named Gargaikoṇḍa-śolapuram and beautified it with temples and buildings.

Rājādhirāja.

His son Rājādhirāja (*c.* 1044—54) annexed Ceylon and repressed the people by violent means. He also proceeded against the Chālukya Someśvara, but lost his life in the engagement.

Kulottunga I.

The next important king was Kulottunga I (*c.* 1074—1112), who, as we have seen before, was a scion of the Eastern Chālukya dynasty and claimed the Chola throne through the right of his mother. He was a powerful king and had to try very hard to hold back the invasion of the Chalukya king Vikramāditya VI. His sons acted as governors of Vengī, the former seat of the Eastern Chālukyas.

After Kulottunga, the Chola power gradually began to decline. Prolonged and tedious wars with Ceylon,

the Pandyas and the Chalukyas continued with uncertain results. The feudatories became powerful and weakened the central power; while external rivals, like the Eastern Ganges and Hoysalas were a serious menace to the integrity of the Chola Empire. However, the dynasty continued for two centuries more, till it was definitely extinguished by Malik Kafūr in 1320.

Weak-Succession.

Like the Cholas, the Pandyas also could claim an extremely old pedigree. But the early kings are nothing but names and even their mutual relationship cannot be determined. It is only in the middle of the ninth century A.D. that we can be somewhat sure of dates.

The Pandyas.

The Pandya kings of the tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries constantly fought with the Ceylonese and Chola kings, but mostly fared badly in their wars with the latter. In *c.* 1220, Māravarman Sundara Pandya I (*c.* 1216—38) gained success against the Cholas and burnt Tanjore and Mraiyur the Chola strongholds. His successor Māravarman Sundara Pāndya II (*c.* 1238—51) annexed some territories belonging to the Hoysalas. The next king Jātavarman Sundara Pāndya I, who came to the throne in 1251, defeated all the neighbouring kings and raised the dynasty to glory. Māravarman Kulaśekhara I (*c.* 1268—1310) instituted the system of governorships in the provinces of his kingdom, which in India has always led to the weakening of the central government. In 1310 there was a struggle for the throne among brothers. Ala-ud-din Khilji of Delhi found the time most propitious and sent Malik Kafūr to reduce the kingdom. After this event the Pandya power declined.

Prominent Kings.

C. Minor Dynasties

The Western Gangas.

The western Gangas ruled in Mysore with their capital at Talakād (near Mysore city); their country was known as Gangāvāḍi after their name; the earliest evidence of their existence goes to the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. They ruled as tributaries to the Chalukyas of Vātāpi but seem to have gained independence after the overthrow of the latter in 753. The first important king was Śrīpurusha (*c.* 725—76) who declared independence and killed a Pallava king. Under his successors the Rāshtrakūtas again and again tried to impose themselves upon the Gangas. The Cholas too gained occasional successes against them. Būrtuga II (*c.* 939—53) allied himself with the powerful Rāshtrakūta king Krishna III, killed his brother to get the throne and defeated and slew Rajaditya I the Chola king. King Rāchamalla (*c.* 974—1004) was defeated by Rajendra Chola I in 1004, and with this event the dynasty came to a virtual end. Ganga chiefs, however, continued for a few centuries more.

Śrīpurusha.

Būrtuga II.

The Yadavas.

Of the Yadava kings who ruled at Devagiri (modern Daulatabad in Hyderabad), the first notable king was Bhillama (*c.* 1185—95), who, though a powerful prince, was defeated by Vīra Ballāla II of the Hoysala dynasty. But his grandson Siṅghaṇa (*c.* 1205—47) pushed his conquests far and wide, and handed over to his successors a kingdom which extended from the Vindhyas to the Krishna. His great grandson Rāmachandra was defeated by Alauddin Khilji in 1294

Siṅghaṇa.

and had to agree to a rich annual tribute. In 1307 and 1312, when he refused to pay tribute, they were defeated by Malik Kafur, the general of Ala-ud-din. In 1318, Harapala, the son-in-law of Rāmchandra, fomented a revolt against the Sultan of Delhi but he was defeated and flayed alive.

The Hoyasalas.

The Hoyasalas, a collateral line of the Yādavas, ruled at Dwarsamudra (modern Halebid in Mysore) at first as feudatories from c. 1010 to c. 1190 and then as independent chiefs. Vīra Ballāla II was the first ruler to assume an independent role and defeated the Yadavas. The dynasty continued to rule at Dwarasamudra till 1310 when Malik Kafur put an end to it.

The Kadambas of Banavāsī.

The Kadamba line was established by a Brahmana named Mayūrśarman who quarrelled with the Pallavas and ultimately succeeded in securing recognition from the Pallavas as an independent power. His date is anything but certain, but it seems possible that he came to the throne about the middle of the fourth century A.D. His successors were all powerful rulers and maintained relations with the Guptas and the Vākatakas. They held the Kanarese districts with their capital at Vaijayanti or Banavāsī in north Kanara. In the middle of the seventh century the Kadamba power was overthrown by the victorious Pulakeśin II of the Chālukya dynasty.

Overthrow.

Under the Chālukyas and the Rāshtrakūtas, Karnāta was ruled by different governors. But with the end of the Rāshtrakūtās the Kadambas were again restored to power as feudatories of the Chālukyas.

Restoration.

Hāngal.

The Kadamba dynasty of Hāngal was founded by Trivabedanga in *c.* 965. One of his successors Taila II (*c.* 1094—1134) combined under him the gubernatorial seats of both Hāngal and Banavāsī. In the hereditary feud between the Chalukyas and Cholas the Kadambas were often the target of the Chola arms. After the death of the last Chalukya king Someśvara IV, the Kadambas under Kāmadeva (*c.* 1180—1215) declared independence. From this time the Hoysalas tried to impose sovereignty over the Kadambas but with practically no success. Their power continued till the middle of the fourteenth century when it was destroyed by the Vijayanagara empire.

Goa.

There was another Kadamba house ruling at Goa from the beginning of the tenth century, beginning as feudatories of the Chālukyas. They had to fight with the Yādavas and Hoysalas. The family was lost in obscurity in the middle of the fourteenth century.

The Śilāhāras.

The Śilāhāras ruled on the western coast and the adjoining interior regions, mostly as feudatories of the Rāshtrakūtas, Chālukyas, Kadambas and Yadavas successively, though they enjoyed a semi-independent existence. There were three houses of the Śilāhāras which came into existence at different times. The oldest of them ruled in Southern Konkan from *c.* 770 to 1025, when the last king was dethroned by the Chalukyas of Kalyana. The second dynasty held northern Konkan from *c.* 800 to 1200 and had ultimately to yield to the Yadava king Singhana. The third house came into existence in the Satara and Kolhapur area in the last quarter of the tenth century A.D. and continued till *c.* 1220.

The Kākatīyas held an eastern part of Hyderabad with their capital at Warangal. The dynasty was at first feudatory to the Chālukyas of Kalyāna but later on established itself as a practically independent power at the end of the eleventh century. With the invasion of Malik Kafur in 1303 the dynasty sank into insignificance.

The Kākatīyas

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

THE CHALUKYAS OF VĀTĀPI

PULAKESIN I (*c.* 550—565)

Kīrtivarman (*c.* 565—97) | Mangalesa (*c.* 597—609)

Pulakesin II (*c.* 609—42) | Vishnuvardhana (Vengi)

Vikramāditya I (*c.* 655—80)

Vinayāditya (*c.* 680—96)

Vijayāditya (*c.* 696—733)

Vikramāditya II (*c.* 733—44)

Kīrtivarman II (*c.* 744—53).

THE RĀSHTRAKŪTAS OF MĀNYAKHETA

- KARKA I (*c.* 710—30)
  - Indra I (*c.* 730—45)
    - Dantidurga (*c.* 745—56)
  - Krishna I (*c.* 756—73)
    - Govinda II (*c* 773—80)
    - Dhruva (*c.* 780—93)
      - Govinda III (*c.* 793—814)
        - Amoghavarsha I (*c.* 814—880)
          - Krishna II (*c.* 880—914)
            - Jagattunga
              - Indra III (*c.* 914—7)
                - Krishna III (*c.* 939—68)
                  - Son
                    - Indra IV (*c.* 974)
                - Khottiga (*c.* 968—72)
                - Nirupama
                  - Karka II (*c.* 973)
              - Amoghavarsha III (*c.* 936--9)
                - Amoghavarsha II (*c.* 917—8)
                - Govinda IV (*c.* 918—36)
      - Indra (Gujarat).

THE CHALUKYAS OF KALYANA

TAILA II (*c.* 973—97)

Satyāśraya (*c.* 997—1009) — Daśavarman

Vikramāditya V (*c.* 1009—14) — Ayyana II (1014—5) — Jayasimha III (*c.* 1015—42)

Somesvara I (*c.* 1042—68)

Someśvara II (*c.* 1068—76) — Vikramāditya VI (*c.* 1076—1126)

Someśvara III (*c.* 1126—38)

Jagadekamalla II (*c.* 1138—51) — Taila III (*c.* 1151—56)

Someśvara IV (*c.* 1184—1190)

THE EASTERN CHALUKYAS OF VENGI

KIRTIVARMAN I

- **Pulakeśin II (of Vātāpi).**
- Vishnuvardhana I (*c.* 615—633)
  - Jayasimha I (*c.* 633—63)
  - Indra-Bhattāraka (*c.* 663)
    - Vishnuvardhana II (*c.* 663—72)
      - Mangī Vuyarāja (*c.* 672—96)
        - Jayasimha II (*c.* 696—709)
        - Vishnuvardhana III (*c.* 709—46)
          - Vijayāditya I (*c.* 746—64)
            - Vishnuvardhana IV (*c.* 764—99)
              - Vijayāditya II (*c.* 799—843)
                - Vishnuvardhana V (*c.* 843—4)
              - Bhima
        - Kokkili (*c.* 709)

- Vijayāditya III (*c.* 844—88)
- Vikramaditya I
  - Chalukya-Bhīma I (*c.* 888—918)
    - Vijayāditya IV (*c.* 918)
      - Amma I (*c.* 918—25)
        - Vijayāditya V (*c.* 925)
        - Bhima III (*c.* 926—7)
      - Chalukya Bhima II (C. 934—45)
        - Amma II (*c.* 945—70)
        - Dānārnava (*c.* 970—3)
          - Śaktivarman (*c.* 1003—15)
          - Vimalāditya (*c.* 1022—63)
            - Rājendrachola (*c.* 1063—1112)
              (King of the Cholas as Kulottunga I).
    - Vikramāditya II (*c.* 925—6)
- Yuddhamalla I
  - Tādapa I (*c.* 925)
    - Yuddhamalla II (*c.* 927—34)
      - Bādapa
      - Tāla II
        - Yuddhamalla III

THE CHOLAS OF TANJORE

VIJAYĀLA (*c*. 850—70)
|
Āditya I (*c*. 875—907)
|
Parāntaka I (*c*. 907—47)
|
- Rājāditya (*c* 947—9)
- Gandarāditya (*c*. 949—57)
- Arinjaya (*c* 956—7)

Parāntaka II
|
- Āditya II (*c*. 956—69)
- Rājaraja I (*c*. 985—1014)
  - Rājendra I (*c*. 1014—44)
  - Kundavā (married Vimalāditya, E. Chālukya)

Children of Rājendra I:
- Rājādhirāja (*c*. 1044—54)
- Rājendra II (*c*. 1054—64)
  - Msdhrantaki Married Kulottuniga I
- Vīrarājendra (*c*. 1064—9)
  - Adhirājendra (*c*. 1069-70)
- Ammanga (married Vimalāditya E. Chālukya)
  - Rajendra Chola II

Kullotunga I (*c*. 1074—1112).
|
Vikrama Chola
|
Kullotunga II
|
Rājarāja II (*c*. 1163).

CHAPTER XVI

RELATIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD

GREATER INDIA

From the earliest period of her history India maintained relations with the outside world. It was mentioned above in connection with Mohenjo-daro that some Indus Valley seals have been found in Mesopotamia, where they must have gone as a result of trade activities. But it is likely that trade was carried on by the land route. Coming to the Aryans we have seen that there is ample evidence about their movements in the Near West as far as Asia Minor, and it has been held by many competent scholars that they are due to the visits of the Aryans of India to those places. From the fifth or fourth century B.C. we hear of distant voyages undertaken by sailors and merchants. The South took a vigorous part in this maritime trade. There were many ports on the Southern coast on the mouths of rivers. But the most important port appears to have been Bhrigukachha (modern Broach) on the mouth of the Narmada

Trade.

In the few centuries before and after Christ Indian trade with the western world increased enormously. India derived a great income out of the extravagance of the Romans, and Roman emperors had sometimes to take steps to stop the drain of Roman wealth

The foreign rule of the north-west of India lasting for more than four centuries could not but have introduced some alien characteristics in the Indian Culture. India's debt to the outside world at this early stage may be summed up here. Some scholars have seen Hellenic or Persian influence in the execution of the capitals of the Asokan Pillars. With much greater certainty Greek and Roman influence has been found in the Buddhist images of Gāndhāra carved during Parthian and Kushān rule. As has been said above, native Indian art of the second and first centuries B.C. never depicted Buddha in human form. It has therefore been held that the idea of representing Buddha in stone was introduced in India by foreigners. Again, the Indian borrowed some astronomical ideas from the Greeks, who were respected in India as good astronomers.

Foreign Rule.

With the decline of the Roman Empire, Indian trade with the west suffered a great deal, but this was compensated by the growing intimacy of India with the Far East. Favoured by their situation, Bengal and the south-eastern coast carried on a brisk trade with the islands of the Eastern Archipelago. This connection continued right up to the mediaeval age.

Apart from trade relations, the story of the spread of Indian thought in distant lands forms a glorious chapter in the history of India. In this story the part played by Buddhism is the most considerable. From the time of Aśoka the Buddhists vigorously took to the propagation of their creed outside India. As a result of their activities Buddhism spread to such distant lands as Ceylon, Burma, Siam, China, Japan, Korea and

Spread of Indian Religion.

Central Asia. But orthodox Brahmanical culture also did not lag behind. In the Far East and the Eastern Archipelago its influence has been equally profound.

The spread of Indian Culture abroad can only be very briefly related here. It may be studied under the following heads:

(1) Central Asia and Afghanistan, (2) Ceylon, (3) Further India, (4) Eastern Archipelago, (5) China, Japan and Korea and (6) Tibet.

From the beginning of her history Central Asia has been a museum of peoples, cultures, religions and languages. Buddhism was first introduced here in the first century B.C. from Gāndhāra. The inhospitable nature of the land makes a thorough survey very difficult, but some explorers have made successive tours in the country and have been richly rewarded for their trouble. They have discovered here Buddhist Stupas, Caves, images, paintings, rich libraries of manuscripts and numerous other antiquities. It may be mentioned here that some dramas of Aśvaghosha, the Court poet of Kanishka, have been found here; the manuscripts of the dramas belong to the second century A.D. and are therefore the earliest existing Indian manuscripts. Of other manuscripts mention may be made of some Buddhist texts and medical treatises.

Central Asia.

Afghanistan.

From the accounts of Chinese travellers it is certain that Buddhism made much headway in Afghanistan, but political circumstances have prevented an exploration in the land.

Ceylon.

Buddhism was introduced in Ceylon by Mahendra, the son or brother of Aśoka. From that time it grew steadily under successive royal patrons. Anurādhāpura and the neighbouring land became the centre of Buddhism. The most important monastery was the Mahāvihāra which became a most influential religious body of the land. In the history of Buddhism Ceylon is of special importance, as we find here the Pali version of the Tripitaka, belonging to the Sthaviravāda sect, which is perhaps older than any available version. Ceylon succeeded in converting Burma and Siam to its creed in the Mediaeval age.

Burma.

Burma probably figured in the list of countries to which Aśoka sent out missions. In the early centuries of the Christian era South Indian alphabet was introduced in the land. Brahmanism had some hold over the people. Numerous images of Vishnu have been found in different parts of Burma. In the thirteenth century the monks of Ceylon introduced the Ceylonese form of Buddhism and Pali scriptures.

Siam.

Buddhism was probably introduced from Burma, but later on the Ceylonese form became the standard. Indian influence is still visible in many ceremonies of the royal court.

Indo-Chinese.

Hindu kingdoms were established in different parts of the land, *e.g.*, Champā in the south-east of the peninsula and Kāmboja in the south. Sanskrit became the cultured language, Indian script was extensively used, and Indian epics became very popular. Śiva and Vishnu became the national gods, and there was some Buddhism as

well. It seems that the colonisation was due to the people of Southern India. A temple of Śiva at Angkorvat in Cambodia is a huge monument which was built at the end of the ninth century.

Champā seems to be the farthest point reached by the Indians. To the north of Champā lay Annam, which received its Buddhism not from India but from China.

The Eastern Archipelago is known as 'Island-India' a just name when we consider how profound the influence of Indian culture has been.

Eastern Archipelago.

Sanskrit inscriptions in Indian script, images of Indian gods, Indian institutions and mythology—all these betray how thorough the Indian occupation was. The natives adopted the Indian culture so completely that the heroes of the *Rāmāyana* and the *Mahābhārata* were thought to have lived in these islands. The people of the Bali island still continued to be Hindus; they worship Indian gods, recognize caste and use a Hindu calendar.

The *stūpa* at Borobudur in Java has rightly been regarded as a wonder of the world. Though the inspiration came from Indian sources,

Javanese Art.

the *stūpa* is very different from what we find in India. Long panels of Buddhistic scenes, which, if placed side by side, would run to three miles, decorate the *stūpa*. At Prambanan we find panels depicting scenes of the Rāmāyana, some of them being the creation of the imagination of the Javanese themselves. There are other monuments of the purely Javanese type which show that Indian influence did not kill the indigenous art of the ruled. It has been said that the religious monuments of the Hindu-Javanese

period subsist as the greatest that the national genius of Java, inspired by Indian ideals, has been able to produce. The Indian ideals were derived mostly from the south of the Pallava period.

China.

China admitted Buddhism in A.D. 62 under Emperor Ming Ti. Both Chinese and Indian scholars enthusiastically took up the work of translating texts of Mahāyāna Buddhism into Chinese. Many Chinese pilgrims visited India, the earliest of them being Fa Hien. The travels of Hiuan Tsang contributed a great deal to the establishment of a fellowship between India and China. It is said that within thirty years of Hiuan Tsang's return to China sixty more pilgrims came to India to learn Buddhism and visit holy places.

Buddhism was introduced in Korea in A.D. 372 from China, whence it was transmitted to Japan.

Tibet.

The first Buddhist mission visited Tibet in *c.* 640. A century later, Padmasambhava, an Indian monk, preached there a type of Buddhism which later on developed into Lamaism. The Buddhism of Tibet lays stress on the use of spells and magical formula to attain supernatural power. It became the house of a Buddhist school known as Vajrāyana, closely allied to Tantrism. Atiśa Dīpaṅkara (980—1053), a native of Bengal, visited Nepal and Tibet and gave great impetus to the study of Buddhism in these lands.

CHAPTER XVII

INDIAN CIVILIZATION

(A.D. 600—1200)

A. Society

The Rajputs.

The dynasties that ruled in Northern India before the Muslim conquest are usually called Rajput, and the period of their rule is designated by the meaningless term 'Rajput age.' In the modern parlance of Northern India, 'Rajput,' which literally means 'the son of a king,' is a synonym for 'Kshatriya,' the second caste in the orthodox Hindu Brahmanical scheme of society. In historical times, from B.C. 600 onwards, we have not always found the Kshatriyas holding the sceptre: none of the important dynasties of ancient India belonged to the Kshatriya caste, of which, according to theory, it was the birthright to rule. But from A.D. 700 we find in northern India the rise of dynasties which claimed descent from such Kshatriya heroes of old as Rama, Lakshmana, Krishna, Arjuna, etc.

The origin of the Rajputs has often been discussed. European scholars believe that the Kshatriya or Rajput group of caste is essentially an occupational group, composed of all clans following the Hindu ritual, who actually undertook the work of government; consequently, people of most diverse races were and are lumped together as Rajputs; and most of the clans now in existence are descended either from foreign immigrants of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. of the Christian era, or from indigenous races such as the

Gonds and the Bhars. But in other words, the Rajputs are descended from the foreign invaders of India, such as the Hunas, who came down upon India in the fifth century A.D.; when they settled down in India and secured political power, they were invested with Kshatriya-hood and legendary genealogies going up to the Sun, the Moon or the Fire-Pit. Some Rajput tribes were descended from aboriginal peoples of India and were raised to the status of Kshatriyas by a similar process.

Such a theory is not acceptable to Indian writers, who claim for the Rajputs, an indigenous descent from the Kshatriya ruling houses of old days. There has been a great intermingling of castes in India and it is very difficult to say with certainty which of the Rajput tribes are of foreign descent.

Caste.

By this time caste had become crystallised. Intermarriages were extremely rare, except sometimes in royal circles. Occasionally kings raised and degraded persons to a certain caste, but such cases were extremely rare. An example of royal interference with caste is found in the action of Ballāla Sena of Bengal, who conferred Kulinism on some persons belonging to the higher castes. It was meant as a distinction, based on some sort of excellence, supposed or real. Like all social divisions in India, Kulinism also became hereditary and now pervades all the higher Bengali castes.

Growing Conservatism.

A growing conservatism of the society, which is also characteristic of the Mediaeval Age of Europe, gradually pervaded the society. Creative social activity was absent, and what we find was only a develop-

ment of what had taken form in the earlier ages. The law books that were composed in this age singularly lack in originality and repeat, and sometimes even copy, what previous law-givers had said. The complex system of daily rituals that a Brahmana ought to follow and the prescription of penances for the expiation of sins—these two subjects, concern most the law-givers of the age. There is every reason to think that the conservative outlook of Manu was spread all over India. Early marriage of girls, prescribed as an ideal by Manu and earlier law-givers, was the usual rule. Though we hear of some lady poets, there is ample evidence to show that women were assigned an inferior position in the social scale. We have also some epigraphic record of *Satī*.

Al-Beruni's description.

Al-Beruni, an Arab scholar, lived in North-Western India for fifteen years at the beginning of the eleventh century and had learned Hindu philosophy and astronomy from original sources. From his account of the Indians, it seems that they had developed an undesirable amount of conceit.

'We can only say, folly is an illness which has no medicine, and the Hindus believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs. They are haughty, foolishly vain, self-conceited and stolid. They are by nature niggardly in communicating that which they know, and they take the greatest possible care to withhold it from men of another caste among their own people, still much more, of course, from any foreigner. According to their belief, there is no other country on earth but theirs, no other race of

men but theirs, and no created beings besides them have any knowledge or science whatsoever. Their haughtiness is such that if you tell them of any science or scholar in Khurasan and Persia, they will think you to be both an ignoramus and a liar. If they travelled and mixed with other nations, they would soon change their mind, for their ancestors were not as narrow-minded as the present generation is.'

This, no doubt, indicates the fact that the Indians had bolted all doors to innovations and refused to test their civilization by coming in touch with the outer world. But matters might not have been so worse as depicted here, for it is only three centuries back that India had absorbed in her population the foreign invaders. Still this definitely betrays the change of outlook that was gradually coming over the Indians.

As we shall see below, the work of colonisation of Indo-China and the Eastern Archipelago was practically complete by A.D. 500 or even earlier. But the Brahmanas did not favour sea-voyages and we find in some law books definite instructions forbidding the same.

B. Government

The Gupta period marked a definite stage in the development of Indian constitution and the form fixed in this age was followed all over India in the subsequent centuries with very little variation. The government centred round the king, helped in the administration by his ministers and officials. There is no evidence of any popular assembly to curb or modify the power of the king; and the influence of the minis-

The Gupta Model.

ters must have depended on their assertiveness as well as the nature and personality of the king. The kingdom was divided into Bhukti, Vishaya, Bhoga, the smallest unit being the Grāma or village. Kings often granted lands to persons or groups of persons, and more often than not Brahmanas were the recipients. Grants were also made to temples and monasteries.

Often the outlying provinces of the kingdom were entrusted to governors, sometimes brothers or sons of the king. After a period of time the governorship became hereditary and the governing house became independent.

War.

War with neighbouring chiefs was considered almost a duty of the kings. Hereditary feuds between two dynasties were very frequent. Law-givers and poets lauded the kings in their attempts to extend their dominions at the cost of others. Wars were not always humane, burning of cities, capture of kings with their queens were common. Victory sometimes resulted in annexation; but usually it only meant the imposition of sovereignty. The army consisted of hereditary troops, irregular troops and mercenaries.

Culture State.

Many kings devoted themselves to nobler occupations than warfare. In this connection may be mentioned the name of king Bhoja of the Paramāra dynasty, whose court became the centre of the literary activity of the age. The king founded a college at his capital and himself composed books on all possible subjects.

We have a good picture of the inner working of a state in the *Rājtarangini* of Kalhaṇa. Stories of

cruelty too horrible to be recalled, the revolts of nobles for self-aggrandisement, the baneful influence of queens and queen-mothers from behind the scene, wives murdering husbands, mothers deposing sons, a corrupt harem, a corrupt court, and a corrupt bureaucracy,—on the other hand good kings patronizing art and literature, building temples and monasteries, remitting taxes when necessary, looking after irrigation and doling out relief in times of famine—this is the picture of a despotism in working. It need not be thought that such a state of things was peculiar to Kashmir alone.

A despotism at work.

The south under the Cholas and the Pandyas had evolved an elaborate system of local self-government. The elected village assembly was the sole authority in matters concerning the village. A village was divided into wards; people of each ward elected some men from among themselves for their names being put into the 'pot.' Both the electors and the candidates seeking election were required to possess some property and intellectual qualification. There was also an age restriction fixing the minimum and maximum limits, and convicts were not allowed to vote. Then tickets bearing the names of the elected men of each ward tied in a bundle and placed in a pot, which therefore contained as many bundles as there were wards. A young boy was then asked to draw out one ticket from each bundle. The men thus selected, their number being the same as the number of wards, formed the village assembly for one year. The assembly was then divided into committees, varying from five to ten

Local Government in the South.

members, each to look after separate departments, such as justice, irrigation, highways, currency, charity, etc.

The central government supervised the accounts of the villages, and punished embezzlement of funds, the assemblies, on the other hand, approved of royal orders before promulgating them, recommended royal gifts. The relationship was, on the whole, cordial. The existence of such a developed organisation testifies to the high civic sense of the Cholas.

C. Learning and Literature

Of the Brahmanical system of education we have little information, as there was no organized educating body in the land; students received instructions at the residences of their *gurus*. The system remained unchanged for centuries.

The Buddhists, however, always organized big monasteries where residential students were taught by learned monks. Nālandā continued to be the most important institution of its kind; there were similar institutions established at other places in Bihar and Bengal, most of which were founded by the Palas: Somapurī (Paharpur, district Bengal), Odantapuri (District Patna). Vikramaśīlā (in East Bihar), ... Vikramapura (probably in East Bengal), and Jāgaddala (in North Bengal). The subjects of study were mostly Buddhist theology and logic. Some of the *alumni* of these institutions gained great celebrity, and took prominent part in maintaining India's connection with Tibet and China.

Buddhist Monasteries.

In these monasteries was also composed much literature on Mahāyāna, a large portion of which was translated into the Chinese and Tibetan languages.

Religious Literature.

The religious literature of the Brahmanas that was composed during this age consists of some law texts (such as those of Nārada, Brihaspati, Sankha, Likhita, etc.), the Purāṇas, some of which were finished as late as the fifteenth or the sixteenth century, but the more important of which were composed by the tenth century, and the sectarian literature that developed among the various sects. There was also a large amount of philosophical writing, the most important of which are Sankaracharya's commentaries on Vedic literature in which he carefully propounds his own philosophy.

Among the Jainas such literature was produced in Western India. The most prolific of the writers was Hemachandra (1089—1172), who, besides sectarian books, also wrote on lexicography and poetics. Historically his most valuable book is the *Sthavirāvali-charita* or *Parisishtaparvan* which describes the lives of Jaina patriarchs and incidentally gives some political history as well.

It is impossible to do justice to the infinite variety of secular literature that was produced in these six centuries. Mention may therefore be made of a few important works that were composed in this period.

Court Literature.

Nearly every poet or dramatist of the age was attached to some royal court, so that the literature that was produced is sometimes known as 'Court literature.' In the field of Sanskrit prose, the place of honour must be given to Bāṇa, the contemporary of Harsha, who

composed the *Harshacharita* and the *Kādambarī*. Other prose-writers of note were Subandhu, the author of the *Vāsavadattā* and Dandin, the author of the *Daśakumāra-charita*. King Harsha is credited with the composition of three dramas. Bhavabhuti, a dramatist of much celebrity, lived at the court of King Yaśovarman of Kanauj (eighth century). His three works, the *Mahāvīra-charita*, *Uttara-Rāma-charita* and the *Mālatī Mādhava* are remarkable for their tragic qualities. Epics of merit were composed by Bhāravi, Māgha and Śri Harsha. The lyric poets of note were Bhartṛihari and Amaru (seventh century?), but in this field, Jayadeva, the court poet of Lakshmana-Sena of Bengal (twelfth century) is probably unsurpassed. The sweet songs of his Gītagovinda have for their subjectmatter the relation between Krishna and the milkmaids of Brindāvana.

Fables.

Of fable literature, mention may be made of some books based on the *Panchatantra*, which itself is a product of the early centuries of the Christian era. The *Kathāsaritsāgar* of Somadeva of Kashmir (eleventh century) is a rich store-house of stories, sometimes with a faint historical background.

Historical Works.

The best historical work in Sanskrit is no doubt the *Rājtaranginī* of Kalhaṇa of which mention has been of Vikramāditya VI of the Eastern made before Bilhaṇa composed a life Chalukya dynasty. Another work of interest is the *Rāmacharita* of *Sandhyākara-nandia*, which gives an account of the Pala dynasty up to Rāmpāla.

Works on poetics, metrics, grammar, etc., were very numerous. Nor was scientific literature lacking.

Technical Literature.

The most famous astronomer of India, besides Āryabhata, was Bhāskaracharya, a southerner of the twelfth century, and the author of the *Siddhānta-śiromaṇī*.

Though a good number of law books was composed, they freely drew upon older texts. Much more important than these are the commentaries on the *Manu-smriti* by Medhātithi and on the *Yajnavalkyasmriti* by Vijñāneśvara.

Prākrit.

Prākrit, the popular language of the earlier times, was standardised into many varieties and there were grammars for each variety. There was a good literature in literary Prākrit. A notable writer in Prākrit was Rājeśekhara (ninth century), of whose numerous works the *Karpūra-manjarī* is the most famous.

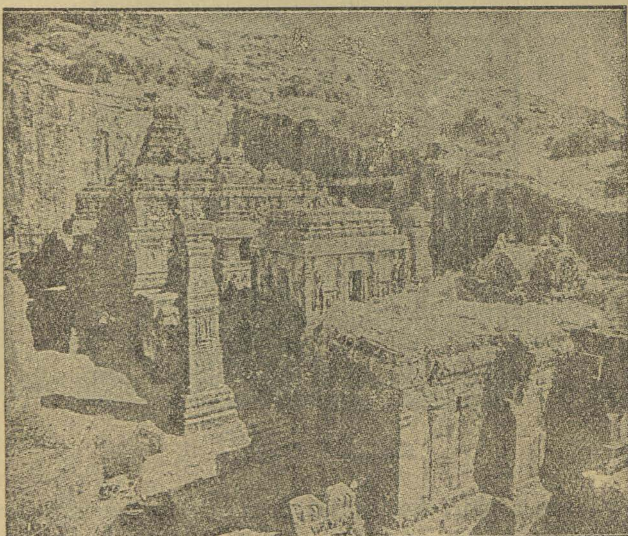
Vernaculars.

It is impossible that a popular dialect should remain unchanged over a large country and a long period of time. Each locality was developing a dialect of its own, known as *Apabhranśa*. These Apabhranśa dialects in turn produced the modern Vernaculars of northern India, Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, etc. It may be held that by the twelfth century these vernaculars were beginning to take shape. The *Prithvīrāja-Rāsau* of Chand Bardai in Hindi, the Charyās and Buddhist songs in Bengali, and the Marathi commentary on the Gita by Jñāneś-vara, may be regarded as the earliest Vernacular literature of northern India.

D. Art and Architecture

Indian architecture of the mediaeval age is generally treated under two heads, Indo-Aryan and Dravidian. The former style obtained all over Northern India, and in spite of some local variations presents some identical features. A templ in the Indo-Aryan style consists of an inner cell to contain idol, a covered

Two Architectural Schools.



Kailash Temple, Ellora.

or open porti o in front of the cell for the devotees to assemble, a path round the cell for purposes of circumambulation and a *Śikhara* or a tall curvilinear top above the cell. The *Śikhara*, as we have seen above, was introduced in the Gupta period; its origin is uncertain, but there is no doubt that its loftiness adds to the temple a dignity and an imposing appearance.

The top of the *Sikhara* is covered with a round piece of stone, grooved all round. The south Indian buildings, on the other hand, have huge curved eves, surmounted not by tall and tapering spires but by flat domed tops.



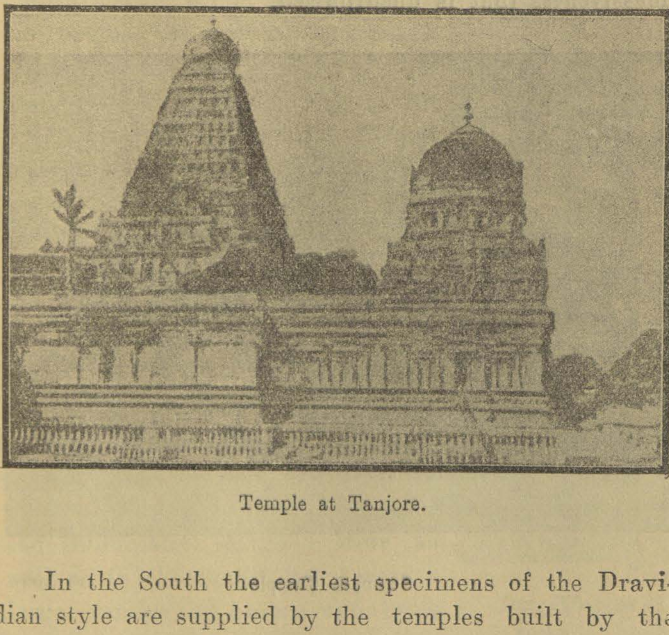
Khajuraho Temple.

They have a more horizontal look than the northern temples.

Some famous temples.

Though innumerable temples have been destroyed by time or zealous iconoclasts, still a sufficient number of them remains for a detailed study. Of the temples of Western India, the famous Somanātha temple was destroyed by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1025, but rebuilt in the subsequent ages. Other famous temples are the Jaina temple on Mt. Abu, unparalleled for its delicate

and profuse decoration and Osia (Jodhpur) group of temples of the ninth century. In East India, Orissa can claim some remarkable temples, *e.g.*, the Lingarāja temple of Bhuvaneshwar, the sun-temple at Konaraka, and the less beautiful but more famous Jagannatha temple at Puri.

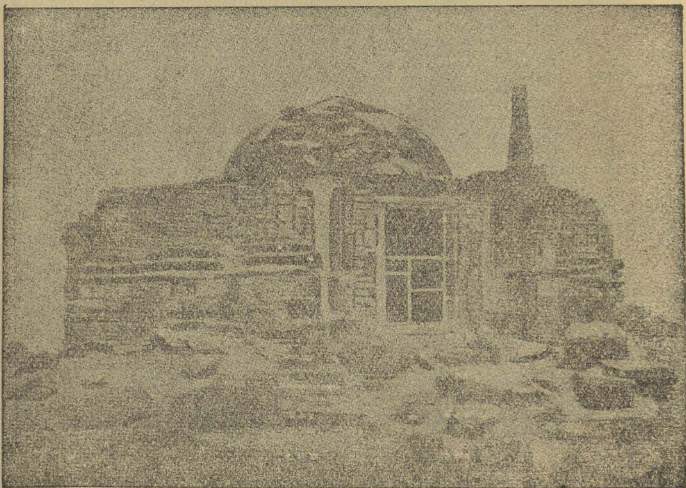


Temple at Tanjore.

In the South the earliest specimens of the Dravidian style are supplied by the temples built by the Pallavas. The most famous of them are those built by Narasimhavarman at Mamallapuram, known as 'Seven Pagodas.' Many others are found at Kanchi, the chief of them being the Kailaśanātha temple, the temples at Bādāmi and Aihole in Hyderabad belong to the period of the Chālukyas. The huge rock cut Kailāśa temple at Ellora has been described as the most marvellous architectural freak in India—One of the

wonders of the world, a work of which any nation might well be proud, and an honour to the king under whose patronage it was executed.

The Cholas did not lag behind in the erection of temples. The temples of Rājarāja and his son Rājendra I at Tanjore and Garigaikoṇḍa are characterised by a massiveness that is unsurpassed.



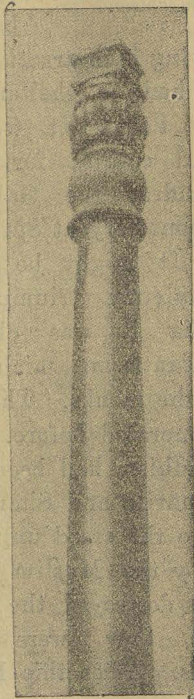
Somnath Temple.

Every other dynasty, the Pāndyas, Kadambas, Hoysalas and Yādavas built temples within their respective territories.

Sculpture.

It has often been said that Indian art declined after the Gupta period. This remark, however, is not fully justified, as it does not do justice to the infinite variety, the minute representation of details and the technical

richness of medieaval sculpture. The artist became conventional to a great degree: he followed every possible detail that was laid down in the Śilpaśāstras or texts on sculpture. He could not therefore show much innovation in the subject-matter or in the details of the images; his skill lay in adding a grace to the face, to impart a suppleness to the body, but at the same time to give the figure a mass without which images readily degenerate into light and fickle productions.


Iron Pillar at Delhi.

As before, sculpture remains wedded to religion. The subjects are almost invariably images of gods and goddesses, or panels depicting mythological scenes. Eastern India under the Pālas developed a special school of artists who produced both Brahmanical and Buddhistic images. Here as well as in the South there were a large number of bronze and brass images produced.

E. Religion

In the cultural history of India of the period under study the most prominent developments took place in the field of religion. The period is marked by the decline and disappearance of Buddhism, the reduction of Jainism and the rise of neo-Hinduism.

Buddhism.

It has already been said before that with the Guptas Buddhism entered on its path of decline. In the South, Brahmanism and Jainism became predominant, Buddhism having been practically ousted. In the North, however, it had a shelter in Bihar and Bengal under the Pālas. It was sometimes patronized in other royal courts; for example, the queen of Govindachandra, the Gahaḍavala king of Kanauj, built a monastery at Sārnāth.

It might be held that by this time Mahāyāna completely triumphed over Hīnayāna. In Eastern India it was closely allied to the principles of Tantrísm, which no doubt had a corrupting effect on the monks. The centres of monastic life have been enumerated before. It was in these monasteries that Buddhism had become concentrated. The activities of Kumārila and Shankarāchārya helped a great deal to make the creed unpopular. The last blow was delivered by the Muslim invaders of the twelfth century, who destroyed the monasteries under the impression that they were destroying Brahmanical strongholds. After this Buddhism practically vanished from India.

'Living Buddhism.'

The Buddhist population of the East was not expelled but assimilated in the Hindu fold. Some cults of the lower castes of Bengal and Orissa may be traced to Buddhism, as it obtained in Eastern India. Buddhist manuscripts were sometimes copied in Bengal in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu is the hero of a Buddha-Charita composed in the eighteenth century.

Jainism had a stronghold in the south in the reign of the Western Chālukyas who patronized the creed. But it had to undergo a hard set back with the rise of the Lingāyat sect in the reign of the Kalachurya Bijjala (1156), when systematic persecution of the Jainas was undertaken. In the Far South it was shown no quarter by the Cholas and Pandyas, and there are some instances of severe persecution under them.

Jainism.

Jainism can still claim about fourteen lakhs of the Indian population. In social organization and religious customs it is now but one of the numerous sects of Hinduism.

The rise of mediaeval Brahmanism is associated with the name of two great Brahmana teachers, Kumārila and Sankarācharya who flourished in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. The former was a scholar of *Pūrva-Mīmānsā* and so believed in the efficacy of Vedic rites. He is said to have studied Buddhism, so as to meet the Buddhists on their own ground, and defeated them in discussion. According to tradition he induced an otherwise unknown king Sudhanvan to persecute the Buddhists.

Brahmanism. Kumārila.

Sankarāchārya was a Brahmana of Southern India, who acquired enormous learning, commented upon many Vedic texts and travelled widely to enter into disputations with the Buddhist within a short life of thirty-two years. He propounded a system of philosophy known as *advaita* which believes in the absolute identity of the individual and the Supreme Being, the manifoldness of the world being regarded only as an illusion

Sankaracharya.

which disappear with the acquisition of true knowledge. He based his theories on the Upanishads which he interpreted and commented upon according to his own philosophical notions. As a result of the activities of Kumārila and Śankara, Buddhism ceased to exist as a popular religion everywhere except in Eastern India.

A tendency.

A tendency that could already be marked in the religion of the Gupta period is found in a much more pronounced form in the early mediaeval age, *viz.*, the worship of one of the gods, Vishṇu or Śiva, in preference to all others and to identify that favourite deity with the Supreme God. By this time all other gods had receded to the background and these two gods with the members of their family with which mythology had invested them, reigned supreme in popular imagination. Their devotees organized themselves into rival sects, each of which developed some philosophy. But it is clear that the ordinary people could not be so exclusive in their attitude.

Vishṇu.

Personal devotion (*Bhakti*) to the god worshipped is a feature common both to the devotees of Vishṇu and Śiva, but it is among the former that the idea was given a supreme position. There is no doubt that this was made possible by the human qualities with which Krishṇa, the most popular form of Vishṇu, was invested. Stories about his divine amours with Radha and other milkmaids of Brindavana grew up and were sung by his devotees.

The belief that Vishṇu incarnates himself again and again to save the world from some impending

disaster was fully developed by now. Rama, the hero of the *Rāmāyana*, came to be counted among these incarnations. By the thirteenth century his worship was made into a cult by his devotees, to whom he became the ultimate divinity.

Avatāra.

Another interesting incarnation is Buddha. It is strange indeed that he should ever have been regarded as an incarnation of God among the Hindus; no doubt, this is a testimony to the assimilative power of Hinduism. But it must be added that this recognition was only halting: in one place for example, it is said that Vishṇu became incarnated as Buddha only to mislead the wicked by his teachings, which shows that Buddha was not excused for his anti-Brahmanical teachings.

In the South, hymns to Vishṇu were composed by poet-saints, called Āṛvaṛs, in the seventh and eighth centuries. From the tenth century began a succession of apostles beginning with Nathamuni. The fourth was the famous Rāmānuja (twelfth century), the founder of the Śri Sampradāya and preacher of a system of philosophy known as *Viśiṣhtadvaita* (qualified non-duality). in which the individual and the Supreme Being are regarded as identical in a very restricted sense.

Another preacher of the South, Madhavāchārya (thirteenth century), founded the sect of the Sad-Vaishṇavas, who completely discard the Vedantic doctrine and regard the individual and the Supreme Being as utterly distinct.

The more extreme sects of Śaivism were known as Pāśupatas, Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas. They con-

ceived of their god in terrible forms, as wearing hide, carrying skull, roaming about in cremation grounds, surrounded by ghosts, who were his followers, and tried to imitate these uncanny acts themselves.

Śiva.

In Kashmir Śaivism was given an extremely refined metaphysical form, with high philosophical ideas. The name of Abhinavagupta, a philosopher of the eleventh century, stands out prominent in the history of Kashmirian Śaivism.

In the South, Śaivism was greatly patronised by the Cholas and the Pandyas. King Rājarāja had a poet saint Nambi-Andar-Nambi at his court, who composed a Tamil collection of hymns called Tirumurai.

In the Deccan, the reign of the Kalachurya Bijjala (1156) saw the rise of the Lingāyat sect, headed by Bāsava, the brother-in-law and minister of Bijjala. The Lingāyats, who still exist in the Deccan in large numbers, are worshippers of Śiva in his phallic symbol, and call themselves Śivācharas or Vīraśaivas in order to be distinguished from the other Śaiva sects. The leading doctrines and practices of the Vīraśaiva religion are summed up in the technical terms, *ashtavartman*, 'the eighth environments' (or aids to faith and protection against sin and evil), and *Shashtasthala*, 'the six stages of Salvation.' The aids to faith include the worship of a linga, besmearing the body with ashes, obedience to preceptors, etc. Some of their texts denounce the caste system, penances for the atonement of sins, visits to holy places, the Śrāddha system and other favourite Brahmanical customs. They bury their dead. Their priests are known as Jaṅgamas.

The Lingāyats.

Sāktism.

Sāktism, or the cult of the worshippers of Sakti or Power, consists of the worship of a female goddess, such as Durgā or Kālī, or any other of her numerous forms, usually regarded as a consort of Siva and as the source of all energy. The destructive aspect of the goddess is emphasized. The worship of the mother goddess was widely prevalent in many countries of the old world, and in India it is perhaps as old as Mohenjo-daro.

Tantrism.

Tantrism is a strange creed of erotic mysticism, which believes in the existence of mysterious forces in the human body, which can be roused by certain processes. It has faith in the potency of sounds, letters, diagrams and syllables and in the free use of spells, magic, charms and amulets sometimes even for gross mundane purposes. It followed practices which judged by the standards of others were immoral and revolting. In Bengal it became closely connected with Buddhism.

Conclusion.

There were other notable religious movements in India during the Muhammedan rule, but most of them may be regarded as the outcome of the form of Hinduism which took shape in the early mediaeval age. This form was the result of about four millenniums of experience, of contact with different cultures, of conflict with heterodox and protestant systems and of infinite variations due to local conditions. It has been truly said that it is useless to try to define Hinduism, to say what things constitute Hinduism and what are against its tenets, that it is at best a geographical connotation, of which a negative definition only is possible. It has engulfed and absorbed whatever has come in its way, and what-

ever has not refused to be absorbed. Except, perhaps, a vague allegiance to the Vedas without knowing what they are, there is no common ground between its different sects. This has been possible owing to the absence of a central authority, priestly or mundane, or some scripture which could be relied upon in cases of differences. The infinite range of its sacred texts has been utilized to lend support and sanction to any custom or belief; it does not deny the possibility of new scriptures. These facts have given Hinduism a remarkably unique dynamicity. Its extreme flexibility and adaptability have never allowed it to grow antiquated. Absorbing within itself the flotsam and jetsam of the ages, it has always been, and still is, 'a movement, not a result; a growing tradition, not a fixed revelation.'

PART II

MEDIÆVAL INDIA

CHAPTER XVIII

THE ARAB CONQUEST OF SINDH

The earliest Muslim invaders of Hindustan were not the Turks but the Arabs. Within twenty years of the death of the Prophet they made themselves masters of Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Persia and tried to extend their conquests further east. A rich and idolatrous country like India could not long remain beyond the pale of their ambitions. Ever since the Khilāfat of Omar (634—43 A.D.) they had tried to gain a footing in India and fitted out expeditions to the Indian coast but with little success.

Expansion of Islam.

It was under the Omayyads that a serious attempt was made to extend the sphere of the Khalīfā's influence in the east. Under Hajjāj, the governor of Irāq, the spirit of conquest found its fullest scope, and Bokhara, Khojand, Samarqand, and Farghānā were conquered by Muslim arms. The raids of Indian pirates on Arab ships piqued the wrath of Hajjāj. The latter wrote to Dāhir, the Brahman ruler of Sindh, to chastise the pirates and send to him the woman captured by them. On Dāhir's refusal to do so, Hajjāj decided to send an expedition to India with a view to wreak vengeance upon the pirates and the Hindu ruler of

Attack on Dāhir, 712 A.D.

Sindh who had given a fresh cause for offence by affording shelter to certain rebels from Mekran.

The expedition was entrusted to Muhammad bin Qāsim, the governor's nephew, a young man of undaunted courage, ambition, and enterprise. He started with 6,000 chosen warriors from Syria and Irāq, and an equal number of camel-riders and a baggage train of 3,000 Bactrian camels. Muhammad entered Sindh and triumphantly marched from one place to another, capturing town after town until he reached Debal in the spring of 712 A.D. Dāhir offered a gallant resistance, but he was defeated and killed. His queen, after the fashion of Rajput women, displayed true valour and heroism, but she was overpowered and captured with her two maiden daughters. The fort of Debal fell into the hands of the Arabs.

Muhammad bin Qāsim's expedition.

Dāhir's relatives were brought before the conqueror, and the treatment which the latter meted out to them is thus described in the *Chachnamah:*

> "Muhammad fixed a tax upon all the subjects according to the laws of the Prophet. Those who embraced the Muhammadan faith were exempted from slavery, the tribute and the poll-tax, and from those who did not change their creed a tax was exacted according to three grades. The first grade was of great men, and each of these was to pay silver equal to 48 *dirhams* in weight; the second grade, 24 *dirhams;* and the lowest grade, 12 *dirhams*. It was ordered that all who should become Musalmans at once shall be exempted from the payment, but those who

were desirous of adhering to their old persuasion must pay the tribute and poll-tax."

Muhammad then proceeded to Brahmanabad and received the submission of the residents of the town. Here the treatment of the conquered was generous, and Muhammad acted according to the order of Hajjāj which ran as follows:

> "As they have made submission and have agreed to pay taxes to the Khalifā nothing more can be properly required from them. They have been taken under our protection, and we cannot in any way stretch out our hands upon their lives or property. Permission is given them to worship their gods. Nobody must be forbidden or prevented from following his own religion. They may live in their houses in whatever manner they like."

A large measure of toleration was granted to the Brahmanas. They were allowed to build their temples, to trade with Muslims and to live without fear, and to strive to improve their credit. They were to be in the same position as the Jews, Christians, and fire worshippers of 'Irāq and Shām. The revenue officers were asked to deal justly and honestly with the people and to tax them according to their capacity. Religious freedom was granted and the Brahmanas were permitted to practise their faith. This was followed by the conquest of Multan where Muhammad received the homage of the Jats and Meds who had suffered much at the hands of the Indian Government. The usual treatment of the conquered followed. Toleration was granted and their lives were spared on payment of the *jeziya*.

Meanwhile a change occurred in the Khilāfat. The new Khalifā Sulaiman was hostile to Hajjāj and the officers who had found employment at his instance. Muhammad bin Qāsim was peremptorily recalled from the Indian command and fell a victim to the Khalifā's unrestrained fury. He was sewn in the raw hide of an ox, and Mir Māsūm writes that "three days afterwards the bird of life left his body and flew to heaven." Such was the tragic fate of the young general who had, by his valour, established the power of Islam in a distant and inhospitable land.

Muhammad's disgrace.

The methods of government of the Arabs were more humane than those of the Turks who followed them three centuries later. The internal administration of the country was left in the hands of the natives themselves. The *iqtas* were held by grantees on the condition of military service and were free from all charges except the *sadqah* or alms. Some soldiers held lands, while others were given fixed salaries. As laid down in the *Shariyat* (the Qurān) four-fifths of the spoils of war was invariably distributed among the soldiers of Islam, and one-fifth was sent to the Khalifā for religious and charitable purposes. Religious gifts were made and land was given in free gift (*waqf*) to men of learning and heads of monasteries.

Arab Rule in Sindh.

The chief sources of revenue were the land tax and the *jeziya*. There were other taxes which were farmed out to the highest bidders—a practice which entailed much suffering on the subject population. All those who refused to embrace Islam had to pay the *jeziya* which was levied with great rigour. Women,

children, and persons who were unfit for any kind of work were exempt from the payment of this tax. Sumptuary laws were passed and certain tribes were prohibited from riding on horses and from covering their hands and feet. Theft was looked upon as a serious crime, and if any of the tribesmen committed theft, their women and children were burnt to death. The natives of the country were required to feed every Muhammadan traveller for three days and nights. The judicial administration was simple and cheap, and rough and ready justice took the place of organised legal procedure. The Qazi decided suits between Muslims and Muslims and Muslims and Hindus, but the Hindus were allowed to settle their disputes in their *Panchāyats* which they " maintained in full efficiency." The Hindus and Muslims occupied the same position in criminal law, but suits of a civil nature were decided by the Hindus in their own Arbitration Boards. Caste had a strong hold upon the people, and the public opinion of the members of a caste often served as a check upon these Arbitration Boards

The Sindhians were overpowered by the Arabs in battle but the effects of their conquest did not last long.

The Arab conquest, a temporary phase.

The Arab conquest, as Stanley Lane-Poole rightly observes, was only an episode in the history of India and of Islam, a triumph without results. There is not much truth in the statement that the bitter feud between the Brahmanas and Buddhists in Sindh greatly helped the foreigners, and that the Buddhists who were dissatisfied with the attitude of the Brahmanas welcomed the Arab invaders. If that had been so, the Arabs with their toleration and forbearance would have

succeeded in establishing their power permanently in the country, and exploited local sectarian differences to their own advantage. But there is evidence to show that the Arab dominion did not strike its roots deep in the soil. Sindh was a desert province and could not meet the huge cost of the expeditions that were needed to conquer it. The Hindus who were immersed too deeply in their philosophical speculations disdained to take serious notice of the barbarians, who had entered their country. The Arabs stood aghast at the prosperity and richness of Hindu culture, and soon became convinced of the superiority of the people whom they had worsted in battle. The Hindus were not so weak as to yield the country easily to foreigners. The Rajput kingdoms, scattered all over Northern India, were ready to grapple with any invader who encroached upon their possessions. Apart from these causes there is another which deserves to be mentioned. The Khalifā did not send sufficient help, and this lack of support from the home government made the Arab position untenable in Sindh before long. As the power of the Khilāfat declined, the distant provinces soon threw aside the yoke and declared themselves independent In a few years nothing remained of the Arab conquest in Sindh except a few families, buildings, and roads.

Politically the Arab conquest was an insignificant event in the history of Islam, but culturally its effects were deep and far-reaching. It brought the Arabs in contact with Indians who were far more civilised, and whose achievements in the domain of learning and art far excelled their own. The Arabs admired the versatility of Hindu intellect and the depth and variety

Arab intercourse with India.

of Hindu culture, and many an Arab *savant* sat at the feet of Hindu and Buddhist scholars to learn from them the mysteries of their sacred lore. During the Khilāfat of Mansūr in 771 A.D., a learned man well-versed in mathematics and astronomy reached Baghdād with other Pandits and translated the *Brahaspati Siddhānta* into Arabic by the Khalifā's permission in collaboration with Ibrahim Fizārī, a court mathematician. The Barāmākās, the ministerial family of Baghdād, extended its patronage to Hindu learning during the Khilāfat of Hārūn (786—803 A.D.) They invited Hindu scholars to Baghdād and appointed them as the chief physicians of their hospitals and asked them to translate into Arabic Sanskrit works on medicine, philosophy, astrology, astronomy, literature and politics. A physician named Mānikya went to Baghdād to treat the Khalifā Hārūn, who was suffering from some disease and effected a complete cure. The Arabs learnt the game of chess from the Hindus and the notations which the nations of Europe learnt from them. Several books were written which show the amalgamation of Arab and Hindu cultures, and it must be said to the credit of the Arabs that religious bigotry did not stand in the way of their adoption of a culture which was alien to them. The Muslims became so proficient in the Indian languages that some of them translated the Qurān into Sanskrit. The Arabs studied various subjects and vastly added to the stock of their knowledge. Painting, architecture, music, the science of poisonous drugs, the art of war, alchemy, logic, and witchcraft—all these the Arabs learnt from the Hindus. The cultural bond between India and Baghdād was snapped when the Abbaṣid dynasty was destroyed by the Mughal leader Halāgū.

The destruction of the Khilāfat disturbed its possessions in all parts of the world, and the Sindh governors became practically independent. The Arab scholars, cut off from Hindu culture, turned to the study of Hellenic art, literature, philosophy, and science.

CHAPTER XIX

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GHAZNAVIDES

The advance of the Turks.

The Arab invasion was a failure because it was directed against a barren and unproductive province. The progress of Islamic conquest was checked for the time but it was resumed with great zeal and earnestness in the tenth century by the Turks who poured into India from beyond the Afghan hills in ever-increasing numbers. After the fall of the Omayyads in 750 A.D. the Abbasids who succeeded to the Khilāfat transferred the capital from Damascus to Al-Kufa, and removed all distinctions between the Arabs and the non-Arabs. The Khilāfat now lost its sole spiritual leadership in the Islamic world; and its authority was circumscribed by the independent dynasties that had lately come into existence. The Arabs had now sunk into indolent lovers of ease, always placing personal or tribal interests above the interests of Islam. The Abbasids accelerated the process of decadence by systematically excluding the Arabs from office. The provincial governors showed a tendency towards independence, as the central government became weaker and weaker. The barbarian Turkish guards whom the Khalifās employed to protect their person grew too powerful to be controlled, and the latter became mere tools in their hands. The Turks grew in importance from Egypt to Samarqand, and when the Samānid kingdom was overthrown by them they founded small principalities for themselves. The

more ambitious of these petty chiefs turned to India to find an outlet for their martial ardour and love of conquest. In 933 A.D. Alaptagin seized Ghazni where his father had been governor under the Samānids and established his own independent power.

Amir Subuktagin —The First Invasion of Hindustan.

After his death in 976 A.D. he was succeeded by his slave Subuktagin. As he seemed to be a man of promise, Alaptagin gradually raised him to posts of trust, and conferred upon him, in course of time, the title of *Amir-ul-Umra*. Subuktagin was a talented and ambitious ruler. Not content with the petty kingdom of his master, he organised the Afghans into a compact body, and with their help conquered Lamghan and Sistan, and extended the sphere of his influence. The Turkish attacks upon the Samānid power further gave him the long-desired opportunity of securing the province of Khorasan for his son Mahmud in 994 A.D.

Eager to acquire religious merit Subuktagin turned to the conquest of India, a country of idolaters and infidels. Jayapala, whose kingdom extended from Sarhind to Lamghan and from Kashmir to Multan, was the first Indian ruler likely to check his advance. When the Afghans encamped on the border of the Lamghan territory, Jayapala, who was frightened beyond measure on seeing the heavy odds arrayed against him, sued for peace, and offered to pay tribute in acknowledgment of the conqueror's sovereignty. Mahmud dissuaded his father from acceding to these terms of peace, and urged battle for "the honour of Islam and of Musalmans." Jayapala, however, renewed his overtures and sent the following message to

Subuktagin: "You have seen the impetuosity of the Hindus and their indifference to death, whenever any calamity befalls them, as at this moment. If, therefore, you refuse to grant peace in the hope of obtaining plunder, tribute, elephants, and prisoners, then there is no alternative for us but to mount the horse of stern determination, destroy our property, take out the eyes of our elephants, cast our children into the fire, and rush on each other with sword and spear, so that all that will be left to you is stones and dirt, dead bodies, and scattered bones."

At this peace was made, and Jayapala bound himself to pay a tribute of a million *dirhams*, 50 elephants, and some cities and fortresses in his dominions. But he soon changed his mind and cast into prison two officers sent by Subuktagin to see that he made good his promise. When the Amir heard of this breach of faith, he hastened with his army towards Hindustan to punish Jayapala for his 'wickedness and infidelity.' Jayapala received help from his fellow princes of Ajmer, Delhi, Kalanjar, and Kanauj, and at the head of a hundred thousand men he advanced to meet the invader on the same field of battle.

The Second Invasion.

The issue of the battle was a foregone conclusion. Subuktagin urged his followers to fight as well as they could for the honour of the faith. The Hindus were defeated in a sharp engagement. Subuktagin levied a heavy tribute and obtained an immense booty. His sovereignty was acknowledged, and he appointed one of his officers to the government of Peshawar. India was not conquered, but the Muslims discovered the way that led to her fertile plains. After ruling his sub-

ject with prudence and moderation for twenty years, Subuktagin died in August, 997 A.D., leaving a large and well established kingdom for his son Mahmud.

Mahmud of Ghazni—His early ambitions.

After the death of Subuktagin the sceptre of Ghazni passed into the hands of his eldest son, Mahmud, who quickly attained to the position of one of the mightiest rulers of Asia, famed in far-off lands for his riches, valour, and justice. To the qualities of a born soldier he added boundless religious zeal which has ranked him among the great leaders of Islam. Mahmud was, indeed, a fierce and fanatical Muslim with an insatiable thirst for wealth and power. Early in life he formed the grim resolve of spreading the faith of the Prophet, and his investiture by the Khalifā further sharpened his zeal. To such a greedy iconoclast India with her myriad faiths and fabulous wealth presented a favourable field for the exercise of his religious and political ambitions. Again and again he led *jihads* against the Hindus, bringing back with him vast booty obtained by the plundering Turkish hordes who followed him into Hindustan.

His Expeditions—The first raid on Frontier towns.

Having settled the affairs of his kingdom Mahmud turned his attention towards Hindustan, and led as many as seventeen invasions during the years 1000—1026 A.D. The first expedition in 1000 A.D. resulted in the capture of several frontier fortresses and districts which were entrusted by Mahmud to his own governors.

Next year he again set out from Ghazni at the head of ten thousand picked horsemen. Thereupon

Jayapala, the Raja of Bhatinda, mustered all his forces, and on the 8th Muharram, 392 A.H. (November 28, 1001 A.D.), a severe action was fought at Peshawar, in which the Musalmans defeated the Hindus. Jayapala was captured with his kinsmen, and an immense booty fell into the hands of the conqueror. The former agreed to give fifty elephants and his son and grandson as hostages as a security for fulfilling the conditions of the peace. But Jayapala personally preferred death to dishonour, and perished in the flames to save himself from humiliation.[1]

Against Jayapala, the Raja of Bhatinda.

The third expedition was aimed against the city of Bhira (1004-05 A.D.) on the left bank of the Jhelum, below the Salt Range, which was soon annexed to the kingdom of Ghazni. Abul Fatah Daud, the heretic ruler of Multan, purchased pardon by promising an annual tribute of twenty thousand golden *dirhams*, when he learnt of the defeat of Jayapala's son Ānandapala near Peshawar. Mahmud entrusted his Indian possessions to Sevakapala, a Hindu convert, and returned to Ghazni, but as soon as the conqueror turned his back, Sevakapala abjured Islam and witheld allegiance to Ghazni. Thereupon, Mahmud marched against him and defeated him. He was compelled to pay 400 thousand *dirhams* as penalty for his disloyalty and bad faith.

Against Bhira and other towns.

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1 Firishta writes that a custom prevailed among the Hindus that when a Raja was overpowered twice by strangers he became disqualified to reign (Briggs, I, p. 38). Utbi also refers to this custom though with a slight variation (Elliot, II, p. 27).

The sixth expedition (1008-09 A.D.) was aimed against Anandapala for having assisted Daud of Multan in his treasonable design. Ānandapala, like the gallant Rana Sanga of Mewar, organised a confederacy of the Rajas of Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalanjar, Kanauj, Delhi and Ajmer, and marched towards the Punjab to give battle to the invader. The response to the appeal of the Punjab chief showed that the Rajput princes were fully alive to the danger to their civilisation. The high and low, the rich and poor, were all stirred to heroic action. The Muslim historian writes that Hindu women 'sold their jewels and sent the money from distant parts to be used against the Musalmans.' The poorer women worked day and night at the spinning-wheel or as hired labourers to be able to send something to the men of the army. The Khokhars also threw in their lot with the Hindus.

Against Ānandapala.

Mahmud's archers were repulsed by the bareheaded and barefooted Khokhars who rushed fearlessly into the thick of the fight and slew and smote three or four thousand Musalmans. Dismayed by this furious charge, the Sultan was about to stop the fight, when suddenly Ānandapala's elephant took fright and fled from the field of battle. The Hindus were panic-stricken, and the Ghaznavide army pursued them for two days and nights. Many were put to death, and an enormous booty fell into the hands of the victors.

Flushed with success, Mahmud marched against the fort of Kangra, also known as Nagarkot or Bhimnagar. The fortress was reputed to hold untold treasures, all dedicated to Hindu gods. When the Muham-

The Conquest of Nagarkot, 1008-09 A.D.

madans besieged the fortress, the Hindus opened the gates out of fear, and Mahmud easily became master of it and seized immense booty. The Sultan returned in triumph to Ghazni with a vast collection of jewels which far exceeded the treasures of the mightiest kings of the world.

Causes of his rapid success.

The acquisition of vast treasures whetted the rapacity of Mahmud's followers and they repeated their raids with a remarkable frequency. The dissensions of the Hindus, though they were numerically superior to their invaders, made their task easy. There was little feeling of national patriotism in the country. The masses were indifferent t political revolutions. Whenever a confederacy was organised, its members often fell out among themselves, and the pride of the clan or tribe interfered with the discipline of the coalition and paralysed the plans of leaders. Self-interest always predominated over the interests of country, while the Muslims never experienced dearth of recruits on account of their boundless zeal for conquest.

After the conquest of Ghor, Mahmud marched towards Multan in 1010 A.D. and defeated and punished the rebellious chief Daud. Three years later he proceeded against Bhimapāla, captured his fortress, and seized vast booty. The Muslims pursued the Raja who fled to Kashmir. Mahmud appointed his own governor, and after plundering Kashmir and compelling a great many people to embrace Islam he returned to Ghazni.

But far more important than these raids was his expedition against Thanesar in the year 1014 A.D.

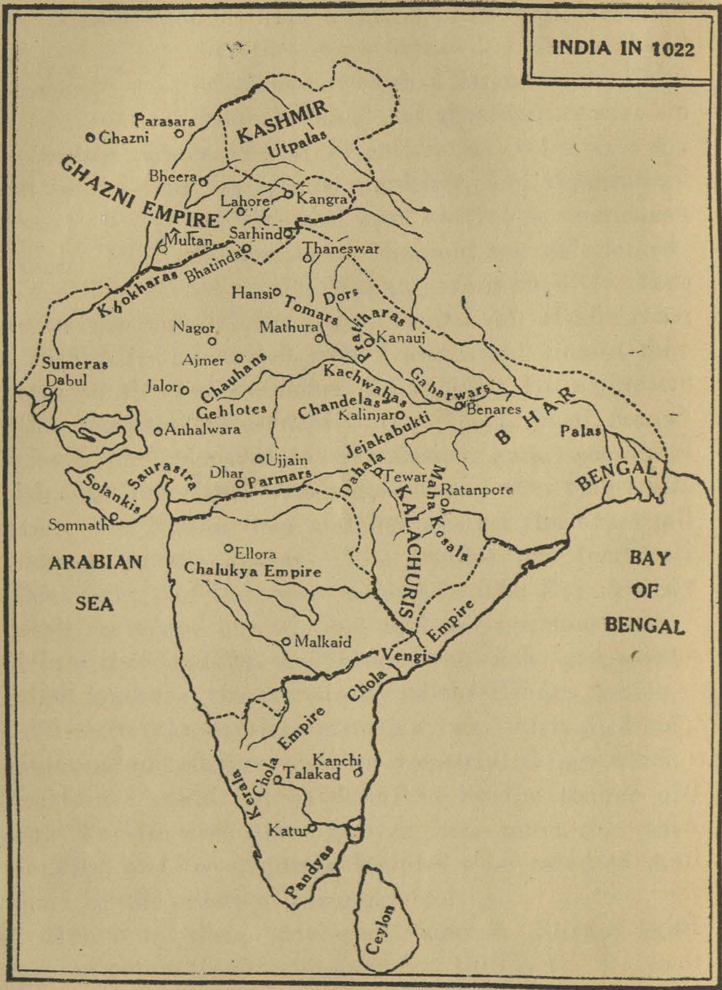
The Hindus fought desperately against the invaders, but they were defeated, and the fort of Thanesar with a large booty fell into the hands of the conqueror.

Against Thanesar.

Ardent spirits offered themselves as volunteers to fight in the crusades against infidelity, and the armies of Mahmud soon swelled to enormous dimensions. Mahmud now determined to invade Kanauj, renowned in the East as the imperial Kshatriya capital of Hindustan. In 1018 A.D. he started from Ghazni and crossed the Jumna on the 2nd December, 1018 A.D He captured all the forts that blocked his way. The Raja of Baran (Bulandshahr) tendered his submission, and, according to Muslim historians, with ten thousand men embraced Islam. The Sultan then marched against the Chief of Mahāwan on the Jumna. The Hindus put forth a gallant fight, but they were defeated. The Raja killed himself to escape humiliation, and an normous booty fell into the hands of the Sultan who now proceeded against Mathura, the sacred city of the Hindus, which, according to the Muslim historian, was unrivalled in population and edifices, and the wonderful things which it contained could not be described by the tongue of man. Turkish iconoclasm proved too much for the defenders, and the exquisite temples were razed to the ground by the orders of the conqueror.

The Conquest of Kanauj.

Mahmud, then, proceeded against Kanauj and appeared before its gates in January, 1019 A.D. Rajyapala, the Pratihar Raja of Kanauj, however, submitted without offering any resistance. The Sultan sacked the whole town and destroyed the temples, seizing an enormous amount of their wealth. Passing through the



INDIA IN 1022
KASHMIR
Utpalas
Parasara
Ghazni
GHAZNI EMPIRE
Bheera
Lahore
Kangra
Multan
Sarhind
Thaneswar
Bhatinda
Khokharas
Hansi
Tomars
Dors
Pratiharas
Nagor
Mathura
Kanauj
Ajmer
Chauhans
Sumeras
Dabul
Jalor
Kachwahas
Gaharwars
Benares
Gehlotes
Chandelas
Kalinjar
B H A R
Palas
Anhalwara
Jejakabukti
Ujjain
Dahala
Tewar
Maha Kosala
Ratanpore
Saurastra
Dhar
Parmars
Solankis
Somnath
KALACHURIS
BENGAL
Ellora
ARABIAN SEA
Chalukya Empire
BAY OF BENGAL
Malkaid
Empire
Vengi
Chola
Chola Empire
Kanchi
Talakad
Kerala
Chola
Katur
Pandyas
Ceylon

country of Bundelkhand, Mahmud returned to Ghazni.

The abject surrender of Rajyapala gave offence to his fellow Rajput princes, and Vidyadhara, son of the Chandela Raja of Kalanjar, attacked Rajyapala and slew him in battle. Resenting the murder of his vassal, Mahmud left Ghazni in 1019 A.D. to chastise the Chandela Prince. The Chandela Raja was ready for battle with a huge army, but he was struck with panic, and luckily for Mahmud, fled from the field of battle, leaving his entire baggage for the invaders. In 1021-22 A.D. Mahmud again returned to India, and after compelling the submission of the chief of Gwalior proceeded towards Kalanjar. The Chandela Raja elected to conclude a peace with the Sultan. Having accepted immense riches and jewels, Mahmud victoriously returned to Ghazni.

The Defeat of the Chandela Prince.

But the most momentous expedition was aimed against Somnath in the year 416-17 A.H. (1025-26 A.D.). Having heard of the fabulous wealth which this temple was supposed to contain, he resolved to proceed against it. Marching through difficult country by way of Ajmer, the Sultan stood before the gates of Somnath[2] in a few days. He invested the fortress which stood on the sea-shore, and was washed by the waves. The Rajput princes, from far and near, gathered to protect their cherished idol. When the Muslims began the

Expedition against Somnath.

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[2] The temple of Somnath was situated in Kathiawad in Gujarat The old temple is in ruins and a new temple has been built by Ahalyabai near the site of the old, but the grandeur of the temple is still indicated by the ruins that exist.

attack the Hindus repelled the assault with stubborn courage, and when the besiegers tried to scale the walls next morning, the defenders hurled them down with irresistible force. Mahmud was filled with dismay; but when he addressed a fervent appeal to God for assistance, the hearts of the warriors of Islam were touched. With one voice they declared their resolve to fight and die for him.

The battle raged loud and fierce, and a scene of terrible carnage followed, and about 5,000 Hindus were slain. Mahmud then entered the temple and broke the idol into pieces. He ordered some fragments of the idol to be sent to Ghazni where they were thrown down at the threshold of the great mosque to give satisfaction to the true believers. It is related that when Mahmud was thus breaking the idol, the priests offered him immense wealth, only if he spared what remained of their god, but he replied with callous indifference that he wished to be known in the world as Mahmud, the breaker of idols, and not as Mahmud, the seller of idols.[3] All appeals for pity, all offers of wealth made by the priests in charge of the temple produced no effect on the conqueror, who by another blow broke the sacred *lingam* into pieces. The Muslim soldiers of Mahmud ruthlessly sacked the temple and easily obtained possession of a large heap of diamonds, rubies, and pearls of incalculable value.[4]

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3 Mr. Habib's statement that the offer of the Brahmanas and Mahmud's rejection of the offer is a fable of later days lacks confirmation by Muslim authorities. There is no improbability in the offer made by the Brahmanas. (Habib, Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, p. 53.)

4 Firishta's story that the idol of Somnath was hollow does not seem to be correct. Al-Biruni says the *lingam* was made of solid gold.

Thus did Mahmud figure, in the eyes of his followers, as a devoted champion of the faith. They followed him uncomplainingly wherever he led them. The Raja of Nehrwala was attacked next for taking part in the defence of Somnath. He fled and his country was easily conquered. This was followed by the subjugation of the Bhatti Rajputs. On his return journey Mahmud was much troubled by Bhima Deva, the chief of Gujarat, and the troops suffered considerably in the Ran of Kutch. He adopted a more westerly route and proceeded to Ghazni by way of Sindh.

Against the Jats.

The last expedition of Mahmud was undertaken to chastise the Jats of the Salt Range as they had molested the Muslim army on its return journey from Somnath. The Jats were defeated and many of them were put to the sword.

Estimate of Mahmud.

Although a great conqueror, Mahmud was no barbarian. Himself illiterate, he appreciated the works of art, and drew around himself by means of his lavish generosity a galaxy of eminent poets and scholars among whom were some leading figures of the eastern world of letters, such as the versatile Al-Birūnī, the mathematician, philosopher, astronomer, and Sanskrit scholar; Utbi, the historian; Farābi, the philosopher; and Baihāki whom Stanley Lane-Poole aptly describes as the "Oriental Pepys." It was an age of poetry, and some of the poets who lived at Mahmud's court were well known all over Asia. Among these were 'Unsuri, the poet-laureate of Ghazni, Farrukhi, and

Asjadi, who is the author of the following well-known quatrain :—

'I do repent of wine and talk of wine,
Of idols fair with chins like silver fine.

A lip-repentance and a lustful heart,

O God, forgive this penitence of mine.'

But the most famous of all these was Firdausi, the author of the world-famed *Shahnama*, whose great epic has placed Mahmud among the immortals of history. Mahmud gave him only 60 thousand silver *dirhams* for completing the *Shahnama*, though he had promised 60 thousand *miskhals* of gold. At this the poet was so offended that he wrote a satire upon the king and left Ghazni for good.[5] Mahmud at last made amends for

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5 This is Browne's rendering of Firdausi's satire in his "*Literary History of Persia*" :—

Long years this *Shahnama* I toiled to complete,
That the king might award me some recompense meet.
But naught save a heart writhing with grief and despair,
Did I get from those promises empty as air!
Had the sire of the king been prince of renown,
My forehead had surely been graced by a crown!
Were his mother a lady of high pedigree,
In silver and gold had I stood to knee.
But, being by birth not a prince but a boor,
The praise of the noble he could not endure!

Firdausi was born at Tūs in Khorasan about 950 A.D., and died in 1020 A.D. Mahmud had promised him a handsome reward, but he was deprived of it through the intrigues of Ayez, one of Mahmud's favourites who entertained ill-feelings towards the poet.—(Elliot, IV, pp 190—92.)

his mistake, but when the belated 60 thousand gold coins arrived the poet's corpse was being carried in a bier to the grave.

Mahmud was stern and implacable in administering justice and was always ready to protect the persons and property of his subjects. There is no need to repeat the charge of avarice brought against the Sultan, as it cannot be refuted. Mahmud loved money passionately, but he also spent it lavishly. He promoted learning by establishing a university at Ghazni, a library, and a museum adorned with the trophies of war, which he brought from conquered lands. It was through his liberality that beautiful edifices rose at his capital, making it one of the finest cities in Asia.

It is not difficult to determine Mahmud's place in history. To the Musalmans of his day he was a Ghazi who tried to extirpate infidelity in heathen lands. To the Hindus, he is to this day a veritable Hun who destroyed their most sacred shrines and wounded their religious feelings. The impartial enquirer, however, must record a different verdict. To him the Sultan was a born leader of men, a just and upright ruler, an intrepid and gifted soldier, a dispenser of justice, a patron of letters, and deserves to be ranked among the greatest personalities of the world.

But his work did not endure. The mighty fabric that he had built up crumbled to pieces in the hands of his weak successors, as consolidation did not keep pace with conquest.

Mahmud failed to establish peace and order in the lands which he conquered by sheer dint of valour. There was no well-organised system of police to put down crime and check the forces of disorder. He

devised no laws or institutions for the benefit of his subjects. Local liberties were suppressed, and men of different nationalities were formed into an empire by force. No bond united them except their subordination or subservience to a common chief. The officers of Mahmud who were all imperialists followed their master, and showed greater interest in the expansion of the empire than in the establishment of an orderly and methodical administration. Such a political organisation as Mahmud's could not last long, and as soon as his masterhand was stiffened in death the elements of disorder asserted themselves with great vigour and undermined the imperial capacity for resistance. As Mr. Habib puts it, when the Saljuqs knocked down the purposeless structure no one cared to weep over its fate.

Al-Birūnī.

Abu Rihān, better known as Al-Birūnī, was born in 973 in the country of modern Khivā and was captured by Mahmud, when he conquered it in 1017 A.D. He came to India in the train of Mahmud and stayed in the country for some time. He sympathetically studied the manners, customs, and institutions of the Hindus, and has left us a vivid account of them which throws much light upon the condition of those times. He writes that the country was parcelled out among petty chiefs, all independent of one another and often fighting amongst themselves. He mentions Kashmir, Sindh, Malwa, Gujarat, Bengal and Kanauj as important kingdoms. About the social condition of the Hindus he writes that child marriage prevailed among them; widows were not permitted to marry again, and *sati* was in vogue. Idol worship was common throughout the land,

and vast riches were accumulated in temples which excited the cupidity of Muslim conquerors. Al-Birūnī studied and appreciated the philosophy of the *Upaniṣads*. He writes that the vulgar people were polytheists, but the cultured classes believed God to be 'one eternal, without beginning and end, acting by free will, almighty, all-wise, living, giving life, ruling and preserving.'

The administration of justice, though crude and primitive in many ways, was liberal and humane. Written complaints were filed and cases were decided on the testimony of witnesses. The criminal law was mild, and Al-Birūnī compares the mildness of the Hindus with the leniency of the Christians. Brahmanas were exempt from capital punishment. Theft was punished according to the value of the property stolen, and mutilation of limbs was recognised as an appropriate penalty for certain offences. Taxation was mild. The state took only one-sixth of the produce of the soil, and Brahmanas were exempt from taxation.

There is ample evidence in Al-Birūnī's pages of India's degeneracy and decay. Politically she was disunited, and rival states fought against one another in complete disregard of national interests. Probably the word national had no meaning for them. Religion was encumbered by superstition, and society was held in the grip of a rigid caste system which rendered the unification of the various groups impossible. Indeed, in many respects India presented a parallel to mediæval Europe, and as a distinguished writer observes: "Everything bore the appearance of disintegration and decay; and national life became extinct."

Masūd, who proclaimed himself king in 1031 A.D. after his father's death by setting aside his younger brother, was a true son of his father, full of ambition, courage, and war-like zeal. The magnificence of the court of Ghazni was unequalled in that age, and Baihāki relates in his memoirs how the Sultan passed his days in pomp and splendour. Though drunken orgies were not unusual for even the great Mahmud, Masūd carried them to excess and himself became the leader of a notorious party of drunkards and debauchees.

Mahmud's successors.

Ariyarak, the Ghaznavide commander of Hind, had begun to behave as an autocrat and cared little for the commands of his sovereign. Masūd, though a slave to drink and dissipation, knew how to assert his dignity when his own authority was flouted or disregarded. The Governor was induced to proceed to Ghazni where he was cast in prison, and probably poisoned. Ahmad Niyaltgīn was appointed to the command of the Indian province, though he had to leave his son at Ghazni as a hostage under a nominal pretext. The new viceroy was hardly less ambitious than his predecessor, and he, too, in Baihāki's words, "turned away from the path of rectitude and took a crooked course."

Ahmad Niyaltgīn, on coming to India, found it difficult to get on with his colleague, Qazi Shirāz, and as he did not consult the latter in the discharge of his duties, a quarrel soon broke out between the two. But when the matter was referred to Ghazni, the Qazi received a strong rebuff, and was ordered to leave military affairs alone. Thereupon, Niyaltgīn undertook an expedition to Benares, tempted by the prospect of plun-

Treason of Ahmad Niyaltgīn.

dering the wealth of this ancient and venerated city of the Hindus. The expedition was a great success. The Qazi, however, could not bear the success of his rival and sent spies to inform the Sultan that Niyaltgin gave himself out as the son of Sultan Mahmud, and aimed at independence. In every possible way, the enemies of Niyaltgīn poisoned the Sultan's mīnd and impressed upon him the necessity of immediate intervention.

Official after official volunteered to go to Hindustan to restore order, but the choice, at last, fell upon Tilak, a Hindu of low birth, but a man of great ability and courage. When he reached Lahore, his presence struck terror into the hearts of the followers of Niyaltgīn, who fled for dear life. He was, however, defeated in a sharp engagement, and a price of 500,000 *dirhams* was set upon his head by Tilak, when the rebel eluded the grasp of his pursuers. The Jats, who were well familiar with the desert and the wilds, caught hold of Ahmad, and cut off his head. Masūd was delighted at the news of victory, and, encouraged by this success, he determined to fulfil his old vow of capturing the fort of Hānsi.[6] His minister tried to dissuade him from doing so, but he replied: "The vow is upon my neck, and accomplish it, I will in my own person." The ministers bowed their heads in profound submission, and the Khwaja was invested with plenary authority at Ghazni.

The Sultan started from Ghazni in October, 1037 A.D., and after a long march reached the town of Hānsi.

Capture of Hānsi.

The invaders laid siege to the fortress hitherto deemed impregnable by the

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6 Hānsi is a city with a ruined castle, 11 miles to the east of Hissar.

Hindus. Though the garrison heroically defended itself, the Muslims took the fortress by storm, and seized an enormous booty. Having placed the fortress in charge of a reliable official, the Sultan marched towards Sonpat, a place not far from Delhi. The Muslims easily captured it, as the chief offered no resistance. The victorious Sultan now returned to Ghazni.

The expedition to India turned out a blunder. Taking advantage of the Sultan's absence, the Saljūq Turks harried the territories of Ghazni, and sacked a portion of the capital. Masūd marched against the invaders, but at Dandānkan, near Merv, he was overpowered by them on March 24, 1040 A.D. This crushing defeat at the hands of the Saljūqs compelled the Ghaznavides to withdraw towards India.

Masūd's flight to India.

The vanquished Sultan fled towards Hindustan in spite of the advice of his minister who vainly pleaded with him to remain at Ghazni. When the royal party reached Marigalah[7] the Turkish and Hindu slaves mutinied and placed upon the throne the Sultan's younger brother Muhammad. Masūd was cast into prison and put to death in 1041 A.D.

The weak successors of Masūd.

After Masūd's death his son Maudūd ascended the throne, and defeated his uncle Muhammad in an engagement, thus avenging the death of his father. Maudūd was succeeded by a series of weak rulers whose uneventful careers deserve little mention. The Saljūq pressure con-

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7 A pass situated between Rawalpindi and Attock, a few miles east of Hasan Abdal.

tinued, and the Ghaznavide empire lost much of its territory. The Saljūqs eventually inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Ghaznavides, and the last independent ruler of Ghazni, Arslān, fled to Hindustan where he died in a state of misery in the year 1117 A.D. The Saljūqs thus established their influence at Ghazni, and dominated the titular Ghaznavide ruler, Bahram, who owed his crown to them. Bahram's reign would have ended gloriously, had it not been for the quarrels that arose between him and the Maliks of Ghor, a small mountain principality between Ghazni and Herat. These warlike Afghans had fought under the banner of Mahmud, but when the sceptre of Ghazni passed into feeble hands they disregarded the authority of their kings. Matters came to a crisis, when a Sūri prince was put to death by Bahram's order. The brother of the deceased led an attack against Ghazni, but he was defeated and killed. Alauddin Husain, another brother, swore to wreak vengeance upon the house of Ghazni. He marched upon Ghazni at the head of a large army and won a splendid victory in 1150 A.D. Bahram escaped to India, but he returned to Ghazni again and recovered his lost power.

Bahram died in 1152 A.D. and was followed by his son Khusrau Shah who was quite unfit to deal with the new situation. The Ghuzz Turkomans advanced upon Ghazni, whereupon Khusrau Shah escaped to India. The implacable Alauddin destroyed the finest buildings of the city and massacred the people. Khusrau Shah died in exile at Lahore in 1160 A.D.

The condition of the empire grew worse, and under Khusrau Malik, the new pleasure-loving ruler of Ghazni, the administration fell into a state of utter chaos.

The power of Ghazni rapidly declined, and the house of Ghor rose into prominence. Alauddin's nephew Ghiyas-ud-din brought Ghazni under his control, about the year 1173, and entrusted it with its dependencies including Kabul to the charge of his brother Muiz-ud-din, better known in history as Muhammad Ghori. Muiz-ud-din, who had an inborn aptitude for war and adventure, led repeated attacks against Hindustan and compelled Khusrau Malik to make peace and surrender his son as security for the fulfilment of treaty obligations. Later, even Khusrau was taken prisoner by stratagems and false promises and put to death in 1201 A.D. A similar catastrophe befell his son Bahrām Shah, and the line of Subuktagin came to an inglorious end. The sovereignty of Ghazni now passed into the hands of ths Ghori chiefs.

Fall of the Empire.

Thus after nearly two centuries the empire of Ghazni disappeared from history. An empire, which rested purely upon a military basis, could not last long without capable and warlike rulers. Mahmud had established no institutions which could hold his wide dominions together. The unwieldy empire had no principle of cohesion or unity, and speedily broke up after his death. The untold wealth obtained from Hindustan fostered luxury among his weak successors and rendered them unfit for the strenuous duties of war. Once the rotten character of the political system became known, disorders began on all sides. The profligate Ghaznavides proved no match for their enemies who continued to seize large slices of Ghazni territory. As disorder increased in the Afghan regions, India also began to seethe with discontent. The multifarious

troubles of the rulers of Ghazni made it difficult for them to deal properly with the Indian problem. But the chiefs of Ghor were men of a different stamp. They were better fitted to lead and command the unruly Turks, and knew how to employ their valour and zeal for purposes of self-aggrandisement.

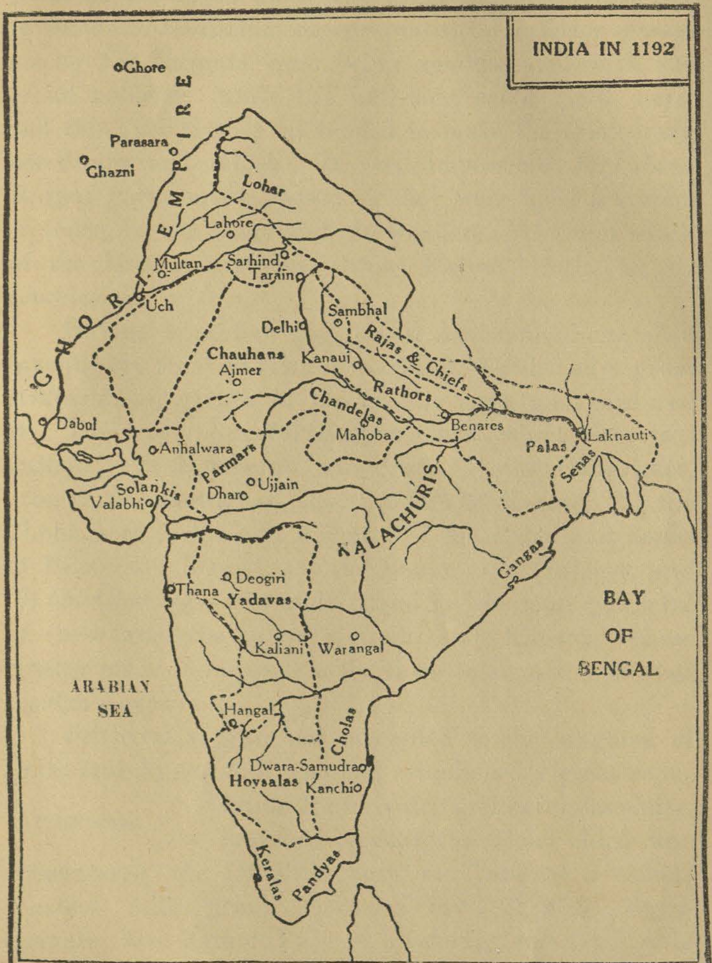
CHAPTER XX

THE CONQUEST OF HINDUSTAN

Muhammad Ghori's attempt to seize the Muslim provinces of Hindustan was a remarkable success. His expedition to Uccha against the Bhatti Rajputs succeeded on account of treachery. He took Multan from the Karmatian heretics in 1174 A.D. Bhima Deva, the Raja of Nehrwala, however, inflicted a crushing defeat upon the invaders who then captured Peshawar, and subdued the whole of Sindh down to the sea-coast. Having failed to capture the fortress of Lahore, Muhammad concluded a peace with Khusrau Malik, and returned to Ghazni. After his departure, Khusrau Malik laid siege to the fortress of Sialkot, assisted by the Khokhar tribes, but failed to capture it. When the news reached the Sultan, he again undertook an expedition against Lahore, and by a stratagem captured Khusrau Malik in 1186 A.D., and put an end to the rule of the dynasty of Subuktagin. Lahore passed into the hands of the victorious chieftain.

Muhammad's Indian Campaign.

Muhammad was still far from being master of Hindustan. In the interior, lay Rajput kingdoms, wealthy and powerful, which were always ready to give battle to the foreigner who dared to invade their territory. The hillmen of Ghazni and Ghor had never encountered such dauntless fighters as the Rajputs. But the feudal organisation of the Rajput society was the principal cause of its weakness. The rivalries and


INDIA IN 1192
Ghore
GHORI EMPIRE
Parasara
Ghazni
Lohar
Lahore
Multan
Sarhind
Tarain
Uch
Sambhal
Rajas & Chiefs
Delhi
Chauhans
Kanauj
Ajmer
Rathors
Chandelas
Dabul
Mahoba
Benares
Laknauti
Anhalwara
Palas
Parmars
Senas
KALACHURIS
Ujjain
Dharo
Solankis
Valabhi
Gangas
Deogiri
Thana
Yadavas
BAY OF BENGAL
Kaliani
Warangal
ARABIAN SEA
Hangal
Cholas
Dwara-Samudra
Hoysalas
Kanchi
Keralas
Pandyas

feuds of the clans hampered unity of action, and the invidious caste distinctions prevented the inferior classes among the Rajputs from being amalgamated with the proud noblesse. Only the well-born could hold fiefs, and this exclusive spirit tended to make the aristocracy hereditary and selfish. It was impossible for these Rajput governments, based as they were upon a system of feuds, to last long, and, no wonder, if the first shock of the Muslim invasion shook Rajput India to its foundations.

Having organised his forces, Muhammad marched towards the frontier town of Sarhind, which had a great strategic importance in the middle ages, and captured it. The most powerful Rajput clans which exercised authority in Northern India were (1) the Gaharwars, afterwards known as the Rathors of Kanauj, (2) the Chohāns of Delhi and Ajmer, (3) the Palas and Senas of Bihar and Bengal, (4) the Baghelas of Gujarat, and (5) the Chandelas of Bundelkhand.[1] The most powerful of these were the rulers of Delhi and Kanauj, whose rivalry made it impossible for them to stem the tide of foreign invasion.

Prithviraja, who had succeeded to the kingdom of Delhi and Ajmer, and who had established a great reputation for chivalry and heroic exploits, marched against the Ghori chief, and encountered the Muslim host at Tarain,[2] a village fourteen miles from Thanesar in 1191 A.D. Jayachandra, the Rathor Raja of Kanauj, was the only

Prithviraja.

[1] A detailed account of the various Rajput Kingdoms of Northern India has been given in a previous chapter.

[2] In most histories it is written as Narain, which is incorrect. Lane-Poole too incorrectly writes Narain. (Mediæval India, p. 51.)

prince who kept aloof from this war; for Prithviraja had insulted him by carrying off his daughter by force. The Sultan followed the time-honoured tactics of the right, left, and centre, and himself occupied a position in the middle of his army. The Rajputs charged both wings of the Muslim army with tremendous vigour and scattered it in all directions, while Govind Rai, the Raja's brother, inflicted a severe wound on the Sultan, who was luckily carried off the field of battle by a faithful Khilji warrior. This disaster caused a panic among the Muslims who immediately dispersed in all directions. Never before had they experienced such a terrible rout at the hands of the Hindus. When the Sultan reached Ghor, he publicly disgraced those officers who had fled from the field of battle.

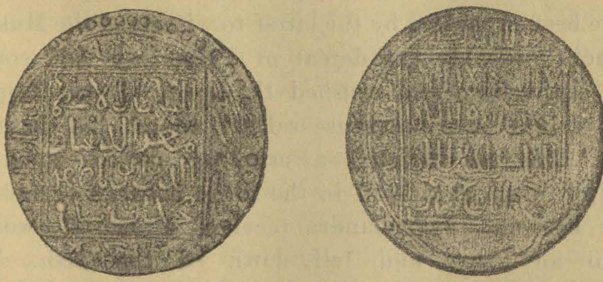
The defeat of Prithviraja.

With a large army, well-organised and accoutred, the Sultan marched from Ghazni towards Hindustan in 1192 A.D. to wreak vengeance upon the Hindu princes. The forces of the Sultan again encamped near Tarain. Alarmed for the safety of Hindu India, Prithviraja called upon his fellow Rajput princes to rally round his banner to fight the Turks. His appeal met with an enthusiastic response and as many as 150 Rajput princes joined the colours of the Chohān warrior.

From morning till sunset the battle raged fiercely. While the enemy was tired, the Sultan, at the head of 12,000 horse, made a desperate charge and "carried death and destruction throughout the Hindu camp." The Rajput valour proved of no avail against these mounted archers and a fearful slaughter ensued on all sides. The result of the battle was a foregone conclusion. The Hindus in spite of their numbers were

defeated by the Muslims. The Muslim historians write that Prithviraja fled from the field, but he was captured near Sirsuti,[3] and finally 'despatched to hell.'

The defeat of Prithviraja was an irreparable blow to Rajput power. The demoralisation caused by this defeat was great, and the Muslims easily captured Sirsuti, Samana, Kuhram and Hānsi. The Sultan proceeded towards Ajmer, which was given up to plunder, and some thousands of the inhabitants were put to the sword. The city was made over to a natural



Coins of Muhammad Ghori.

son of Prithviraja on promise of punctual payment of tribute. Having left his faithful lieutenant Qutb-ud-din Aibek in charge of his Indian possessions, the Sultan returned to Ghazni. Qutb-ud-din, in a short time, conquered Mirat (Meerut), Kol[4] and Delhi, the last of which he made the seat of his government.

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3 It was a city on the banks of the ancient Saraswati. In Akbar's time Sirsuti was one of the *mahals* of Sarkar Sambhal.

4 Kol is a place near Aligarh. It has an old fortress which still exists.

Conquest of Kanauj.

Beyond Delhi, in the heart of the Doab, lay the principality of the Rathor clan with its capital at Kanauj renowned all over India as a nursery of warriors and statesmen. Its ruler Jayachandra, famous alike in legend and history, was reputed as one of the most powerful princes of the time. Jayachandra had, perhaps, hoped that after the defeat of Prithviraja, he would become the paramount sovereign of all Hindustan, but his hopes were doomed to disappointment. In 1194 A.D. Sultan Muhammad marched from Ghazni against the Raja of Kanauj. No confederacy seems to have been organised by the latter to withstand the Muslim attack; probably the defeat of Prithviraja had cooled the enthusiasm and crushed the spirit of the Rajputs who might have otherwise rallied round his banner. The Muslims inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Rajput army encamped in the plain between Chandwār and Etawah. Jayachandra received a mortal wound from an arrow and fell down on the earth. The Rathors, after thi discomfiture, migrated to Rajputana, where they founded the principality of Jodhpur. The victorious Sultan now marched against Benares, where he destroyed temples and ordered mosques to be built in their places. He then returned to the fort of Kol, and, laden with the spoils of war, returned to Ghazni.

Other conquests.

Qutb-ud-din's career in Hindustan was one of unbroken triumph. He marched against Ajmer, and restored its lawful ruler, a vassal of Ghazni. but appointed a Muslim governor to exercise control over him. From Ajmer, Aibek marched his forces against

Bhima Deva, the Raja of Nehrwala, whom he defeated. Gwalior, Biyana, and other places were compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty of Ghazni.

Muhammad bin Bakhtiyār Khilji, an 'intrepid, bold, and sagacious' general accomplished the conquest of Bihar with astonishing ease. He led an organised attack against the province, probably in 1197 A.D., at the head of a small detachment of 200 horsemen, and quickly captured the principal fortresses. The Buddhist monasteries, or *viharas*, were demolished, and a large number of books were seized, and cattered by the invaders. The Muslim chronicler says that many 'shaven-headed Brahmanas' were put to the sword. It was the idolatry of latter-day Buddhism which stimulated the zeal of the Muslims, and the *debris* of Buddhist *viharas* and stupas that exist to this day, bear testimony to their iconoclastic zeal. The Muslim raid on Bihar gave a death-blow to Buddhism; but it appears from an inscription of Vidyādhara dated Samvat 1276 (1219 A.D.) that it did not wholly disappear from Northern India.

Conquest of Bihar.

The conquest of Bihar was followed by that of Bengal. The Muslim chronicler, relying upon the account furnished by a certain soldier of Farghānā in the service of Muhammad bin Bakhtiyār, writes that the intrepid general marched to the city of Nudiah at the head of a small party of 18 horsemen and that the aged Rai of that place, Lakshman Sena on hearing of his approach fled from a backdoor of his palace, and sought shelter at Vikrampur near Sonargaon which was

Conquest of Bengal.

a place resorted to by all discontented men at Gaur.[5] This is an exaggerated account of what actually happened. Muhammad destroyed the city of Nudiah and made Lakhnauti or Gaur his capital. The *khutbā* was read and coins were struck in the name of Sultan Muiz-ud-din. A large portion of the enormous booty seized by Muhammad was sent to Qutb-ud-din.

Conquest of Kalanjar.

In 1202 A.D. Qutb-ud-din marched against Parmardi, the Chandela Prince of Bundelkhand. The latter found it impossible to resist effectively the Muslims, and the fort of Kalanjar fell into the hands of the victors. The forts of Kalpi and Badāon were subdued next, and in this way all the important places in Northern India were brought under the sway of Ghazni by Qutb-ud-din.

The tide turns.

The kings of Ghazni were not satisfied with their Indian possessions. They fondly looked back towards the lands of the Oxus, which the kings of Ghazni, ever since the days of Mahmud, had tried in vain to annex. Muhammad followed the same practice and invaded Khwarizm at the head of a large army in the year 1204 A.D., but the troops of Ghori were pressed so hard by the Shah of Khwarizm and his allies that they were completely routed, and the Sultan with difficulty escaped with his life. As soon as the news of this disaster was circulated abroad, the forces of confusion began to work. A Ghazni officer hastily went to India and declared himself governor of Multan by producing

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5 The account of the *Tabqat-i-Nasiri* accepted *in toto* by Dr. Vincent Smith is undoubtedly exaggerated. The old view has been modified in the new and revised edition of his *Early History of India.*

a forged royal order, and he was accepted by the army. Ghazni shut its gates against the unlucky Sultan, and the turbulent Khokhars stirred up strife and harried the districts of the Punjab. The Sultan was, however, not unnerved by this gloomy prospect. He quickly recovered Multan and Ghazni and then marched towards Hindustan to chastise the Khokhars, who suffered a crushing defeat near a ford of the Jhelam. Having obtained this victory, the Sultan returned to Lahore.

The Khokhar snake was scotched but not killed. Having failed in open engagement, the Khokhars had recourse to treachery. Some of their chiefs who burnt with rage to avenge the deaths of their kinsmen formed a conspiracy to take the life of the Sultan. On his way from Lahore to Ghazni, the Sultan halted at Dhamiyāk in the Jhelam district where he was stabbed to death by a fanatic in March, 1206 A.D.

Not so fanatical as Mahmud, Muhammad was certainly more *political* than his predecessor. He clearly perceived the rotten political condition of India, and made up his mind to found a permanent dominion.

Estimate of Muhammad.

Mahmud's love of wealth had blinded him to the gains of far-reaching importance, which the Indian conquest was bound to bring to the conqueror. Muhammad Ghori, from the outset, took a different course; he tried to consolidate his conquests, and in this work he had the valued assistance and co-operation of his able lieutenant, Qutb-ud-din who afterwards founded a dynasty of the kings of Delhi.

Mahmud never aimed at permanent conquest; he had come sweeping like a whirlwind and had returned to his native land after the acquisition of vast booty.

Wealth and extirpation of idolatry were the chief objects of his raids; but Muhammad was a real conqueror. He conquered the country and aimed at permanent settlement. A complete conquest of India was impossible as long as warrior blood throbbed within the veins of the Rajput race. But for the first time the Muslims had brought extensive territory under their direct sway. Qutb-ud-din was appointed viceroy of Hindustan, and charged with the duty of extending further the dominion of Islam—a fact which clearly shows the object which Muhammad had in mind. It is true, he turned his eyes westwards for territorial expansion, but it would be wrong to blame Muhammad for following a traditional policy. His work in India was more solid. The Muslim power, which he founded in India, increased as time passed, and from humble beginnings the kingdom of Delhi gradually developed into one of the greatest empires of the east. It was no mean contribution to the greatness of Islam.

CHAPTER XXI

THE SLAVE DYNASTY[1]

(1206—1290 A.D.)

Qutb-ud-din's elevation to the throne.

Muhammad died without a male heir. Minhāj-us-Sirāj writes that on one occasion when a favourite courtier spoke to the Sultan about the default of male heirs, he replied with absolute indifference: "Other monarchs may have one son, or two sons: I have so many thousand sons, namely, my Turki slaves, who will be the heirs of my dominions, and who, after me, will take care to preserve my name in the *khutba* throughout those territories." After the death of his master, Qutb-ud-din Aibek naturally came to the forefront. He became the ruler of Hindustan and founded a dynasty of kings, which is called after his name. Originally Aibek was a slave. He was purchased by the Qazi of Nishapur, through whose favour he acquired a reputation for courage and manly bearing. After the Qazi's death he passed into the hands of Sultan Muīz-ud-din. Though ugly in external appearance, Aibek was endowed with "laudable qualities and admirable impressions"; and by sheer dint of merit he rose gradually to the position of *Amir Ākhur* (master of the stables). During the Sultan's expeditions to Hindustan, Aibek loyally served him, and as a reward

1 This dynasty has been miscalled the Slave dynasty. The slaves who occupied the throne had been originally slaves but they were manumitted by their masters and raised to the rank of freemen.

for his services, he was left in charge of the Indian possessions. As viceroy of Hindustan, he secured and extended the conquests made by his master. He strengthened himself by matrimonial connections; he married the daughter of Taj-ud-din Eldoz, and gave his sister in marriage to Qubaicha, and his daughter to Iltutmish, one of his own slaves and governor of Bihar.

His Career of Conquest.

As Muhammad's general Aibek had captured Hānsi, Meerut, Delhi, Ranthambhor and Kol, and conquered the country as far as Benares. In 1197 A.D. he led his forces against Nehrwala. The chief was defeated in a hotly contested engagement, and the whole country was ravaged by the Muslims. For six years, *i.e.*, from 1196 to 1202 A.D. there was cessation of warfare in India, but in 1202 A.D. Aibek marched against the fort of Kalanjar, captured it and seized enormous booty. Mahoba was occupied next. Bengal and Bihar had already been subjugated by Muhammad Khilji, son of Bakhtiyār, who had acknowledged the suzerainty of Qutb-ud-din. All Hindustan, from Delhi to Kalanjar and Gujarat, and from Lakhnauti to Lahore, was brought under the sway of the Muslims, though the distant lands comprised in the empire of Delhi were not thoroughly subdued.

Qutb-ud-din as Ruler.

Qutb-ud-din was a high-spirited and open-handed monarch. He administered the country well, dispensed even-handed justice to the people, and exerted himself to promote the peace and prosperity of the realm. The roads were freed from robbers, and the Hindus were treated with kindness, though the Sultan, like 'a mighty fighter in the way of God,' captured thousands-

as slaves during his wars. His generosity is praised by all writers who style him as *lākhbakhsha* or giver of lakhs.

Aibek was a powerful and capable ruler who always maintained a high character. Brave and energetic, sagacious and just, according to Muslim ideas, Aibek was devoted to the faith, and as the founder of a large kingdom on foreign soil among races whose martial prowess was well-known, he ranks among the great pioneers of Muslim conquest in India. He gave proof of his religious zeal by building two mosques, one at Delhi and another at Ajmer. He died in 1210 A.D. from a fall from his horse, while he was playing *chaugan*,[2] leaving a large kingdom to his successor.

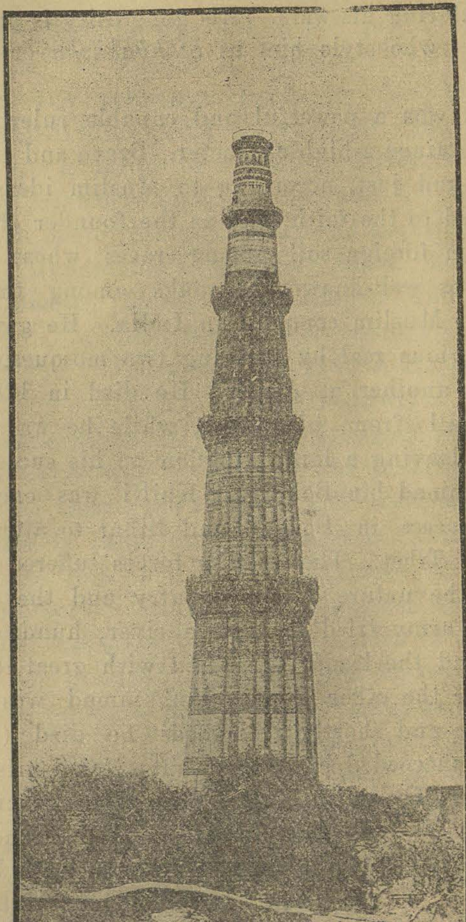
Muhammad bin Bakhtiyār Khilji was encouraged by his success in Bengal and Bihar to attempt the conquest of Tibet. The Muslim forces suffered terribly owing to the nature of the country and the climate. When the army tried to cross a river, hundreds were drowned and the leader succeeded with great difficulty in reaching the other bank. Muhammad was struck with shame and shortly afterwards he died (1205-6).

Confusion after Aibek's death.

Ārām succeeded his father, but after a brief reign of one year Iltutmish, who was then governor of Badāon, defeated and dethroned him. At the time of Ārām's death Hindustan was parcelled out into four principalities—Sindh was held by Qubaicha; Delhi and its contiguous country were in the possession of Iltutmish; Lakhnauti was held by the Khilji Maliks:

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2 *Chaugan* was something like modern polo. In the early middle ages it was a favourite game in Persia and India.



Qutb Minar.

Lahore was held alternately by Qubaicha, and Eldoz (or Yaldūz) who was then supreme at Ghazni.

Iltutmish's accession to the throne.

Īltutmish who ascended the throne in 1210 A.D. is the greatest of the Slave kings. He was the slave of a slave,[3] who rose to eminence by sheer dint of merit, and it was solely by virtue of his fitness that he superseded the hereditary claimants to the throne. But he did not find the throne of Delhi a bed of roses. He had to face a critical situation, as rivals like Eldoz and Qubaicha aspired to universal dominion, while some of the Muizzi and Qutbi amirs watched with sullen resentment the usurpation by a slave of the throne which lawfully belonged to the line of Aibek. Besides, there were numerous Hindu princes and chieftains whose recognition of the sovereignty of the Muslims was only nominal. But Īltutmish was not the man to fail or falter in the face of difficulties, and in grim earnestness he set himself to the task of dealing with the situation in a bold and decisive manner.

Suppression of rivals.

Having overpowered all the refractory amirs, he brought the whole of the principality of Delhi under his control. But his safety depended upon the suppression of his rivals, and he at once turned his attention towards them.

Eldoz who had been purchased by Sultan Muhammad, when he was young in years, won the confidence of the Sultan by his ability and courage, and after the death of his master, became ruler of Ghazni. But he

3 Īltutmish was purchased by a certain merchant Jamal-ud-din who brought him to Ghazni. From there he was taken to Delhi and was sold to Qutb-ud-din along with another slave named Bak.

was expelled by Qutb-ud-din who made himself master of the country. The people of Ghazni, however, soon got disgusted with the drunken orgies of Qutb-ud-din, and invited Eldoz to assume charge of the kingdom. Eldoz was a spirited soldier; he ultimately defeated Qubaicha, governor of Sindh, and established himself in the Punjab. Iltutmish, who could not afford to see a formidable rival established so near the northern frontier, marched against him, and inflicted a crushing defeat upon him in 1215 in the vicinity of Tarain. Eldoz was taken prisoner and put to death. The defeat of Eldoz was followed by an attack upon Qubaicha, who, after an unsuccessful engagement, tendered his submission in 1217. But it was not till 1227 that he was finally subdued.

The invasion of Chingiz Khan.

This danger was nothing in comparison with the storm which burst upon India in 1221 A.D. The Mongols[4] under Chingiz Khan came down from their mountains steppes in Central Asia and ravaged the countries that came in their way. The Mongol was a ferocious and blood-thirsty savage and in fact the word Mongol itself is derived from the word Mong, meaning brave, daring, bold.

Chingiz, who was a typical Mongol warrior, was born in 1155 A.D. at Dilum Boldak near the river Oman. His original name was Temujin. His father died when he was only 13 years of age. As a result of this calamity,

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[4] The forms Moghul and Mongol are used for one and the same word. When the Mongols separated themselves from their ancestral regions and came to close quarters with the Musalman inhabitants of the western states of Central Asia, their neighbours mispronounced the name of their original nation and called them Moghul.

the young lad had to struggle for years against adversity, and it was only in 1203 A.D. that he was proclaimed Khan. With lightning speed he overran China, plundered and devastated the Muslim countries of Western Asia. Balkh, Bokhara, Samarqand, Herat and Ghazni, and many other famous and beautiful cities were ruined by his predatory raids. When Chingiz attacked Jalal-ud-din, the last Shah of Khwarizm, he fled towards Hindustan, whither he was pursued by the invaders. He encamped on the Indus and prepared to give battle to the Mongols. He sent an envoy to Iltutmish requesting him to grant a place for residence in Delhi for some time, but the latter excused himself on the ground that the climate of Delhi would not suit him, and had the envoy murdered. Jalal-u-din was eventually defeated by the Mongols, and he had to escape with only a handful of followers. Having allied himself with the Khokhars, he fell upon Nāsir-ud-din Qubaicha, whom he drove into the fortress of Multan. After a short time, however, he went to Persia, where he learnt that the army in Irāq was ready to help him, but he was murdered by a fanatic whose brother he had previously slain. The Mongols found the heat of India intolerable and went back to the lands to the west of the Indus, which had a great attraction for them. Thus was India saved from a great calamity, and Iltutmish now felt himself strong enough to crush his native enemies.

Conquests.

The Khilji Maliks had withdrawn their allegiance after the death of Qutb-ud-din. Some of them, like Ali Mardan and Ghiyas-ud-din Khilji, had also struck their own coins and caused their names to be read in the *khutba* as

independent rulers. In 1225 A.D. Iltutmish sent an army against Ghiyas who concluded a treaty and paid a large tribute. The *khutba* was read, and coins were struck in his name. When the Sultan's forces withdrew, Ghiyas expelled the governor of Bihar and seized the province. Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Shah who held the fief of Oudh marched against him. Ghiyas was defeated and slain, and the Khilji amirs were made captives. The whole of Lakhnauti passed into the hands of the prince. Ranthambhor fell in 1226 A.D.; and Mandore in the Sewalik hills followed suit a year later.

The fall of Qubaicha.

Qubaicha, another slave of Sultan Muiz-ud-din, was a man of intellect and sound judgment, and, through his master's favour, had acquired considerable influence. He was appointed governor of Uccha, where he managed the affairs so well that in a short time he made himself master of the whole country of Sindh which now extended as far as Sarhind, Kuhram, and Sirsuti. His successes aroused the jealousy of the rival chief at Ghazni, and Lahore soon became a bone of contention between him and Eldoz. When the Khalj and Khwarizm forces were defeated by Qubaicha, they found protection with Iltutmish who espoused their cause. He started from Delhi by way of Sarhind towards Uccha at the head of a large army. Hearing of the approach of the Sultan, Qubaicha entrenched himself in the fortress of Bhakkar. The royal army invested the fortress of Uccha and captured it after a protracted siege of two months and twenty-seven days in 1227 A.D. The capitulation of Uccha so disheartened Qubaicha that he embarked in a boat in order to save his life, but he was drowned in the Indus.

In 1228 A.D. Iltutmish received a patent of investiture from the Khalifā of Baghdad, an honour which greatly increased the prestige of the Indo-Muhammadan power in India. It legitimised the Sultan's authority and silenced those who challenged his claim to the throne on the score of birth, and gave to his authority the sanction of a name, honoured and cherished by the entire Muslim world. The name of the Khalifā was inscribed on the coins issued from the royal mints, and the Sultan was described as "Aid of the Commander of the Faithful Nasir 'Amir-ul-Mumnin." The currency was remodelled, and Iltutmish was the first to introduce a purely Arabic coinage; and the silver *tanka* weighing 175 grains became the standard coin.

Investiture by the Khalifa.

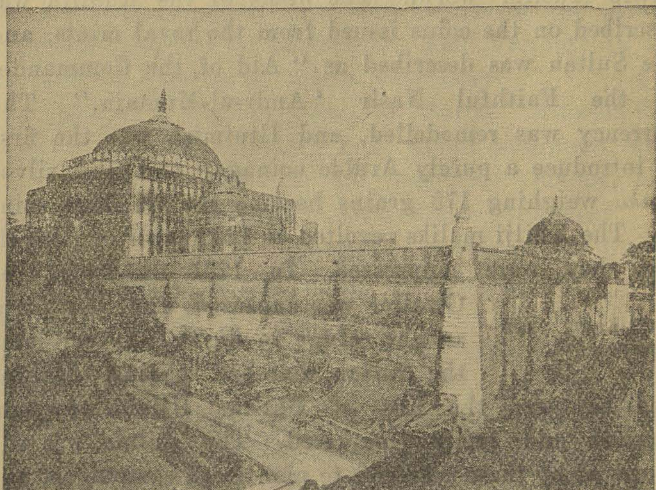
The Khilji maliks revolted at Lakhnauti in Bengal, but they were suppressed. In 1231 the fortress of Gwalior was captured, and the Raja sought refuge in flight. A year later the Sultan marched against Malwa, and captured the fort of Bhilsa. Ujjain was soon reached and easily conquered. The Sultan was encouraged by these successes to plan fresh campaigns, but he fell ill and died in 1235.

Other conquests.

Iltutmish is undoubtedly the real founder of the Slave dynasty. It was he who consolidated the conquests that had been made by his master Qutb-ud-din. He brought under his sway the whole of Hindustan except a few outlying provinces and displayed extraordinary vigour and intrepidity in dealing with his foes. Though he was always busy in military campaigns, he extended his patronage to the pious and the learned. He was

Estimate of Iltutmish.

deeply religious, and his observance of the faith led the Mulāhidas to form conspiracy to take his life, but luckily it proved abortive. The Sultan was a great builder, and the Qutb Minar, unique among the monuments of India, still stands as a worthy memorial of his greatness. As long as he lived, he behaved like



Īltutmish's Mosques at Badāon.

a great monarch, and the contemporary chronicler Minhāj-us-Sirāj extols his virtues in these words: "never was a sovereign of such exemplary faith, of such kindness and reverence towards recluses, devotees, divines and doctors of religion and law, from the mother of creation ever enwrapped in swaddling bands of dominion."

Iltutmish, who was well aware of the incapacity of his sons, had nominated his daughter Reziya as his heir But the nobles, who had a prejudice against the succession of a woman, placed upon the throne prince Rukn-ud-din, a son of Iltutmish, a notorious debauchee, addicted to the most degrading sensual enjoyments. While the young prince was immersed in pleasures, the affairs of the state were managed by his mother who was a high-spirited and ambitious woman. But when mother and son brought about the cruel murder of Qutb-ud-din, another prince of the blood royal, the maliks and amirs assumed an attitude of hostility towards them. The governors of Oudh, Badāon, Hānsi, Multan and Lahore became openly hostile, while the crisis was precipitated by an attempt of the Queen-mother to take the life of Sultan Reziya, the eldest daughter and heiress-designate of Iltutmish. The conspiracy was nipped in the bud, and Rukn-ud-din was seized and thrown into prison where he died in 1236 A.D. The nobles now rallied round Reziya and saluted her as their sovereign.

The weak successors of Iltutmish.

Reziya was a talented woman. The contemporary chronicler describes her as a "great sovereign and sagacious, just, beneficent, the patron of the learned, a disposer of justice, the cherisher of her subjects, and of warlike talent and was endowed with all the admirable attributes and qualifications necessary for a king; but, as she did not attain the destiny, in her creation, of being computed among men, of what advantage were all these excellent qualifications to her." She tried her best to

Reziya's policy.

play the king. She cast off female garments, abandoned the seclusion of the zenana, donned the head-dress of a man, and transacted business in open darbar. She took an active part in campaigns against the Hindus and the rebellious Muslim chiefs, and herself led an expedition against the governor of Lahore, who was compelled to acknowledge her authority. But her sex proved her worst disqualification. As Elphinstone remarks, her talents and virtues were insufficient to protect her from a single weakness. It was shown in extraordinary marks of favour to her master of the horse, who, to make her partiality more degrading, was an Abyssinian slave, Jamal-ud-din Yakūt. The free-born Khans, whom the corps of the Turkish mamluks known as "the forty" had superseded in power, resented the preference which the queen showed to the Abyssinian. The feeling against her was further accentuated by her public appearance which shocked the orthodox Muslims.

The first to raise the standard of revolt was Altūniā, the rebel governor of Sarhind. Reziya forthwith started from the capital to put down the revolt. When she reached Tabarhindah, the Turkish amirs slew her favourite Yakūt and imprisoned her in the fortress. But the artful queen proved too clever for her captors. She cast her spell on Altunia who contracted a marriage with her, and marched towards Delhi to recover the kingdom. Muiz-ud-din Bahrām Shah, brother of Reziya, who had been proclaimed king by the amirs, led an army against the queen and her consort and defeated them. The partisans of Altunia deserted him, and together with his spouse he fell into the hands of

Altūniā's revolt.

the Hindus, who put them to death in 1240. Reziya's reign lasted three and a half years.

Reziya was followed on the throne by her brothers Bahrām and Masūd, both of whom proved utterly incompetent to govern a large kingdom. After Masūd's death the throne was offered to Nāsir-ud-din Mahmūd Shah, another son of Īltutmish, in 1246 A.D. He was a pious, God-fearing and kind-hearted ruler who patronised the learned and sympathised with the poor and the distressed. He led the retired and obscure life of a darvesh, denied to himself the pleasures of royalty, and earned his living by copying verses from the Quran. By character and temperament he was unfitted to rule the kingdom of Delhi at a time, when internal factions and Hindu revolts conspired to weaken the monarchy, and the Mongols hammered upon the gates of India. But fortunately the Sultan had an able minister in Balban who guided the domestic as well as the foreign policy of the state throughout his master's reign.

Nāsir-ud-din Mahmūd.

Balban was a Turk of the tribe of Ilbari, and his father was a Khan of 10,000 families. He was, in his youth, captured by the Mongols, who conveyed him to Baghdad, where he was purchased by Khwaja Jamal-ud-din of Basra. The latter took him to Delhi where he was purchased by Īltutmish. Balban was appointed *Khasahbardar* (personal attendant) to the Sultan, and was enrolled in the famous corps of forty slaves. Under Reziya he was promoted to the rank of *Amir-i-Shikar* (Lord of the Hunt). Bahrām entrusted to him the fief of Rewari, to which was afterwards added the district of Hānsi.

Balban's early career.

When the Mongols under their leader Mangū, invaded Sindh and laid siege to the fortress of Uccha in 1245 A.D., Balban organised a large army to repel their attack. It was his military vigour and intrepidity which inflicted a crushing defeat on the Mongols, and won such brilliant success for the arms of Islam. When Nāsir-ud-din ascended the throne in 1246, he was appointed principal minister of the state.

Balban crossed the Ravi in 1246, ravaged the Jūd and Jilam hills, and suppressed the Khokhar and other contumacious tribes. He undertook several expeditions into the Doab to chastise the refractory Hindu Rajas. The Rana of Malāki, the country between Kalanjar and Kara, was subdued, and Mewat and Ranthambhor were ravaged. The rebellious Muslim governors were suppressed, and Gwalior, Chanderi, Malwa, and Narwar were subdued.

Six months later, when the Sultan marched towards Uccha and Multan, Imād-ud-din Rihān who was jealous of Balban's influence, excited the maliks and poisoned the ears of the Sultan against him. The great minister was consequently banished from the court in 1253, and Imād-ud-din was installed as *Vakil-i-dar*[5] at the capital.

Imād-ud-din was a renegade Hindu and his tutelage now galled the pride of the maliks and nobles of the court, who were all "Turks of pure lineage and Tajziks of noble birth," and looked upon it as a disgrace to serve under him. The administration grew lax, and from all sides requests poured in upon the

5 The principal duty of the *Vakil-i-dar* was to hold the keys of the gate of the king's palace. The office existed among the Mughals also and was no doubt considered important by them

Sultan to dismiss the vile upstart. The powerful maliks eventually persuaded the Sultan to order the dismissal of Rihān. He was ordered to the fief of Badāon, and Balban returned to the capital in triumph in February, 1254 A.D.

Suppression of Rebellions.

When Qutlugh Khan, governor of Oudh, revolted in 1255, Balban marched against him and obliged him to withdraw. The former was assisted by all the disaffected maliks and Hindus and was joined by Iz-ud-din Balban Kashlu Khan, governor of Sindh, who, also, following the evil example of Qutlugh Khan, revolted. The two maliks effected a junction of their armies near Samana and marched towards the capital but were unable to put into execution their nefarious project. Towards the close of the year 1257 A.D. the Mongols again invaded Sindh, but when the royal forces marched against them, they retreated.

The last expedition.

The last expedition was against the hilly country of Mewat in the year 1259 A.D., where the rebels under their leader Malkā a Hindu, plundered and destroyed villages, and harassed the peasantry in the districts of Hariana, Sewalik, and Biyana. Ulugh Khan crushed tre rebels and cleared the whole country of these pests.

Balban's achievement.

For full two decades Balban preserved the state from many a danger, and put down with an iron hand the elements of disorder and strife. The frontier posts were strongly garrisoned; a large and efficient army was constructed, and the Mongols were successfully repelled. The rebellions of the refractory Hindus were

suppressed, and the disaffected amirs and maliks too were curbed. But for Balban's vigour and energy, the kingdom of Delhi would have hardly survived the shocks of internal revolts and external invasions.

Balban becomes king.

After Nāsir-ud-din's death in 1266 A.D., the mantle of sovereignty devolved upon Balban. His first task was to reorganise the administration, and to take effective steps to prevent the recurring Mongol raids. Barani writes: "Fear of the governing power, which is the basis of all good government, and the source of the glory and splendour of states, had departed from the hearts of all men, and the country had fallen into a wretched condition." By means of drastic punishments and relentless measures the new Sultan, who was an adept in the art of government, suppressed the elements of disorder, and taught people obedience and submissiveness.

Order and security.

One of the greatest achievements of Balban was the establishment of order in the Doab and the neighbourhood of Delhi. The Mewatis who had become very troublesome were put down with a strong hand, and the robbers who infested the roads and made travel and commerce difficult were captured and punished. The contemporary chronicler observes that "the den of the robbers was thus converted into a guard-house, and, Musalmans and guardians of the way took the place of highway robbers."

The Sultan next turned his attention to the state of disorder which prevailed in the mountains of Jūd. The campaign was a great success, but it convinced the Sultan of the inefficiency of the Shamshī veterans, who

enjoyed grants of land for which they made no return. An enquiry was ordered into their tenures, and they were deprived of their former power and influence.

Internal government.

Balban organised the internal administration on a most efficient basis. It was half civil, half military. He was himself the fountain of all authority, and enforced his commands with the greatest rigour. Even his own sons who held important provinces were not allowed much initiative, and had to refer to the Sultan all complicated matters on which he passed final orders, which were to be strictly enforced. In administering justice he never showed partiality even towards his own kith and kin, and when any of his relations or associates committed an act of injustice, he never failed to grant redress to the aggrieved party. So great was the dread of the Sultan's inexorable justice that no one dared to ill-treat his servants and slaves. When Malik Barbak, one of the courtiers, who held a jāgīr of 4,000 horse and the fief of Badāon, caused one of his servants to be scourged to death, his widow complained to the Sultan. He ordered the Malik to be flogged similarly in the presence of the complainant and publicly executed the spies who had failed to report his misconduct. A well-established system of espionage is inseparable from despotism, and Balban with a view to make the administration of justice more efficient appointed spies in his fiefs, who reported to him all acts of injustice. To make these reports accurate and honest, he greatly restricted the field of individual observation, and when the report was made, he showed no indulgence on the score of rank or birth. Even Bughra Khan's movements were watched by the spies, and it is said that

the Sultan took great pains to keep himself informed of his activities. These spies no doubt checked crime and protected innocent persons against the high-handedness of those in power, but their presence must have demoralised the community and led to the suppression of even the most legitimate and harmless amenities of social life.

The Mongols.

But the one all-absorbing preoccupation of the Sultan was the fear of the recurring Mongol invasions. Although he possessed a large and disciplined army, he never left Delhi, and devised measures to safeguard his dominions against the raids of these nomad hordes. The Mongols had seized Lahore and every year harried the lands of Sindh and the Punjab. The Sultan never moved from the capital, and kept a vigilant watch upon the vulnerable parts of the empire. The provinces of Multan and Samana, which were most exposed to attack, being near to the northern frontier, were entrusted to his own sons, Muhammad and Bughra Khan, who maintained large and well-trained armies to fight against the Mongols. But this constant fear greatly influenced the foreign policy of Balban. He never attempted the conquest of any distant country; his whole attention was concentrated upon measures to guard himself and his kingdom against the Mongols. Even the organization of the administration was carried out with a view to strengthen the government and to enable it to cope with these calamitous raids. From Amir Khusrau's[6] description of these nomad savages, which

6 Abul Hasan, better known by his *nom de plume* of Amir Khusrau by far the greatest Muslim poet of India, was born at Patiali in 651 A.H. (1253 A.D.), and died at Delhi in 725 A.H. (1324-

is somewhat tinged by the poet's own feelings for he had on one occasion fallen into their hands, we can form some idea of the horrors which their recurring raids implied. He writes: "There were more than a thousand Tartar infidels and warriors of other tribes, riding on camels, great commanders in battle, all with steel-like bodies, clothed in cotton; with faces like fire, with caps of sheep-skin, with heads shorn. Their eyes were so narrow and piercing that they might have bored a hole in brazen vessel . . . Their faces were set on their bodies as if they had no neck. Their cheeks resembled soft leathern bottles, full of wrinkles and knots. Their noses extended from cheek to cheek and their mouths from cheek-bone to cheek-bone. . . . Their moustaches were of extravagant length. They had but scanty beards about their chins . . . They looked like so many white demons, and the people fled from them everywhere in affright."[7] Hardy and heartless invaders such as these, coming from the cooler regions beyond the Hindukush, could not be trifled with, and Balban was led by the instinct of sheer self-preservation to ignore all other things and keep his army ever on the war-path to repel their oft-repeated incursions.

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25 A.D.). While yet a boy he became a disciple of Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Aulia. He entered the service of Balban as an attendant on his son Prince Muhammad, who was fond of the society of the learned. Gradually he rose into prominence and was elevated to the position of the poet laureate. He died of grief at the death of his favourite saint Nizam-ud-udin Aulia. He has written numerous works, brief notices of which are given in Elliot III, pp. 67—92, 523—67.

7 For further account of these savages see Elliot III, Appendix, pp. 528-29.

Tughril's Rebellion, 1297 A.D.

Tughril Khan, the governor of Bengal,[8] who had been appointed by Balban, was led astray by his evil counsellors. They told him that the Sultan was old and his two sons were occupied in dealing with the Mongol attacks, and the leaderless nobles possessed neither men nor munitions to march to Lakhnauti to frustrate his attempt at independence. Tughril readily listened to this false and mischievous advice and "allowed the egg of ambition to be hatched in his head." He attacked Jajnagar, carried off a large booty consisting of valuable goods and elephants, and kept it all for himself. This act of disloyalty was consummated by a formal declaration of independence, when he assumed the royal title of Sultan Mughis-ud-din, struck coins, and caused the *Khutbā* to be read in his own name. The possession of vast wealth enabled him to bestow large gifts upon his associates. As Barani writes, money closed the eyes of the clear-sighted, and greed of gold kept the more politic in retirement. Sedition became so rife that the soldiers as well as citizens ceased to fear the sovereign power, and gave their adhesion to the rebellious governor.

The Sultan was much disturbed by the news of this revolt. A royal army crossed the Sarjū and marched towards Lakhnauti but when it reached Bengal it was opposed and defeated by Tughril, who had drawn to his banner by means of his liberality numerous adherents from the country districts. The troops of

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8 Tughril was originally a Turkish slave who had been purchased by Balban. Being a brave and warlike man, he subdued the Rajas of the neighbouring countries and compelled them to pay tribute.

Delhi fled, and many of them deserted their colours and went over to the enemy.

Another expedition met with a like fate. Emboldened by his success, Tughril marched out of Lakhnauti, fell upon the army of Delhi and completely defeated it. The news of this defeat overwhelmed the Sultan with shame and anger, and he swore vengeance upon the rebels. Having entrusted the affairs of Delhi to Malik Fakhr-ud-din, he proceeded towards Samana and Sunnam, and asked his son Bughra Khan to accompany him to Bengal. Prince Muhammad was asked to take care of the province in his charge, and to keep a vigilant eye upon the Mongols. At the head of a large army, the Sultan started for Lakhnauti in spite of the rains. He ordered a general levy in Oudh, and enrolled about two lākhs of men in his army. A large flotilla of boats was constructed, and the royal troops crossed the Sarjū, but their passage in the marshy land of Bengal was delayed by the rains. The royal army wended its way through mud and water to the capital of Bengal only to find that the rebel, deeming himself unable to withstand the Sultan, had fled towards the wilds of Jajnagar, taking with him treasure, elephants and a picked body of fighting men. The royalists pursued him and it was after an arduous search that his camp was discovered. His head was cut off and all his dependents were captured. The Sultan rewarded those who had risked their lives in his service.

Balban returned to Lakhnauti where gibbets were erected on both sides in the bazar, and the relations and accomplices of Tughril were hanged mercilessly. These terrible punishments went on for two or three days, and it is said that even the *qazis* and *muftis*

obtained their pardon with great difficulty. When the work of slaughter was over, Balban made arrangements for the restoration of order in the country. He entrusted the province to his son Bughra Khan whom he asked to recover and hold in peace the rest of Bengal and to eschew convivial parties. Then he asked the Prince with a stern look: "Didst thou see?" The Prince did not understand what his father meant to convey by this question. The Sultan again said, "Didst thou see?" The Prince returned no answer, and the Sultan repeated the question for the third time and added, "You saw my punishments in the bazar." The Prince bent down his head in profound submission, and the pitiless father addressed him in these words: "If ever designing and evil-minded persons should incite you to waver in your allegiance to Delhi and to throw off its authority, then remember the vengeance which you have seen exacted in the bazar. Understand me and forget not that if the governors of Hind or Sindh, of Malwa or Gujarat, of Lakhnauti or Sonargaon, shall draw the sword and become rebels to the throne of Delhi, then such punishment as has fallen upon Tughril and his dependents will fall upon them, their wives, their children, and all their adherents." He called Bughra Khan again for a second interview and gave him valuable advice about political affairs. On the day of his departure, he embraced him affectionately and bade him farewell. On his return to Delhi he ordered gibbets to be erected again for the execution of those residents of Delhi and its environs, who had assisted in the late rebellion. It was with great difficulty that the Qazi of the army was able to persuade the Sultan to desist from such a frightful proceeding.

The rebellion was effectively suppressed, but a great domestic bereavement befell the Sultan. When the Mongols under their leader Samar invaded the Punjab in 1285 A.D., his son Prince Muhammad, who was placed in charge of Multan, marched towards Lahore and Dipalpur to repel their attack. He was defeated and killed in the encounter that followed; and his sacrifice won him the posthumous title of the "Martyr Prince." The Sultan was so stricken with grief that, shortly afterwards, he died in 1286 A.D., leaving a will in which he nominated his grandson Kai-Khusrau as his successor. No sooner were his eyes closed in death than the nobles and officers opposed his last testament and elevated Kaiqubad to the throne, an unhappy choice, which ultimately led to the fall of the Slave dynasty.

Death of Prince Muhammad.

Balban's career, full of strenuous activity extending over a period of forty years, is unique in the annals of mediæval India. He enhanced the dignity of the kingly office and established peace and order by a policy of 'blood and iron.' He maintained a splendid court where he presented himself on public occasions with great magnificence. He always behaved like a well-bred oriental monarch; his sense of kingly dignity was so great that he never appeared but in full dress even before his private servants. He never laughed aloud nor joked in his darbar; nor did he permit any one to indulge in laughter or amusement in his presence. He despised the company of the low and the vulgar, and nothing could ever draw him into unnecessary familiarity either with friends or strangers.

Personality of Balban.

So punctilious was he in maintaining the prestige of his office that on one occasion he refused a proffered gift of some lākhs from a rich upstart who had accumulated a vast fortune, but who could not boast of a lofty pedigree. Low birth was the greatest disqualification for public office, and the nobles and officers never dared to recommend any but a well-born man for employment in the state. Balban was fond of wine in his youth but he completely gave it up when he became king. He took delight in hunting excursions and often went out on long expeditions. In his private life he was a kind-hearted man. He loved his sons and relatives, and even towards strangers who sought shelter at his court he behaved with great generosity. Though his lot was cast in stormy times, he took interest in letters and extended his patronage to literary men. All things considered, Balban was a most remarkable ruler who saved the infant Muslim state in India from the Mongol peril and by establishing social order paved the way for the military and administrative reforms of Alauddin Khilji.

The fall of the Slaves.

Balban's death left a void that could not be filled. There was none among his survivors, who could wield the sceptre which he had swayed for twenty years with such ability and success. The personal factor counted for much in mediæval politics, and as soon as the master-hand of Balban was removed by death, the affairs of the state fell into confusion, and the old confidence in the justice and strength of the administration was completely shaken.

Kaiqubad who was only seventeen years of age was elevated to the throne through the intrigues of the

Kotwal of Delhi. From his childhood, he had been brought up with such care that he was never allowed to have even a look at a fair damsel, or taste a cup of wine. Day and night he was watched by his tutors who taught him the polite arts and manly exercises, and never permitted him to do an improper act or utter an indecent word. Such a prince found himself all of a sudden in the possession of a mighty kingdom, the vast wealth of which could afford everything that was needed for personal enjoyment. He cast to the winds all lessons of prudence and self-restraint and at once changed his enforced puritanism for a life of debauch and pleasure. Balban's work was undone; the example of the king was followed by the nobles and the ministers so that court life became notoriously corrupt, and men of all ranks gave themselves up to the pursuit of pleasure.

While Kaiqubad spent his time in drunken revels and orgies, the business of government was carried on by Malik Nizam-ud-din, son-in-law of the influential Kotwal of Delhi, who had deftly wormed himself into the confidence of the Sultan. Nizam-ud-din was a highly ambitious man; his arrogance and ascendancy offended the veteran Khans, who had since the days of Aibek and Iltutmish served the state with signal devotion. Bughra Khan's absence in Bengal, the decline of the power of the nobles, and the intemperance and licentiousness of Kaiqubad led Nizam-ud-din to harbour designs of usurping the throne at a favourable moment. But this nefarious plan could not succeed unless Kai Khusrau, the heir-designate of Balban, who still commanded the respect and esteem of the nobility, was got rid of. With such thoughts in his mind the

minister approached his insensate master and obtained his assent to the prince's murder in a state of intoxication. The unsuspecting young prince was called away from Multan and on his way to Delhi was murdered near Rohtak.

This murder sent a thrill of horror throughout the whole country. Parties were formed and the Khilji Amir Jalal-ud-din Firuz, who held the office of the *Arīz-i-mamālik* (muster-master) placed himself at the head of a powerful faction. The power of Jalal-ud-din increased and several Turkish Maliks and Amirs went over to his side, thinking that resistance was impossible. Two days later Sultan Kaiqubad was murdered in his palace of mirrors by a Khilji Malik and his corpse was thrown into the Jamna.

Such was the inglorious end of the Slave kings of Delhi. Jalal-ud-din Firuz now obtained the support of friends and foes and ascended the throne at Kilughari. But the people of Delhi were hostile to the Khiljis; they extended no welcome to Firuz, and it took him some time to reconcile them to his usurpation.

The slaves found it impossible to avert the revolution that occurred at Delhi. Their sway extended over the Doab, the Punjab, Bihar, Bengal, Sindh and certain parts of Central India and Rajputana. But these possessions availed them nothing against the dangers that confronted them. The fall of royal prestige, the repeated raids of the Mongols, the weakness of the army, the dissensions of the Turks, the intrigues of ambitious men to secure power for themselves, the lack of financial organisation—all these brought about the ruin of the Slave monarchy. The government was still in the nature of a military occupation and we read of

no reforms in the civil administration to make it worthy of wider public support. The throne belonged to the man who wielded a powerful sword and the good old Firuz found no difficulty in wresting it from men who had exchanged pleasure for it. As for the Hindus they were indifferent to what was taking place at Delhi.

The causes of Muslim success.

The chief cause of Muslim success in Hindustan was not the superior military strength of the conquerors but the lack of unity among the Hindus. The whole country was split up into a number of states, often fighting against one another. There was no occasion when some Hindu Prince did not assist the Muslim conqueror against his own co-religionists. In fact the Hindus were overpowered by foreign invaders with Hindu help. The Rajputs were the finest soldiers in the world, devoted to their cause and reckless in their courage, but they could never act in unison or fight under the same banner for the defence of country or nation. Too often they thought of their clan and its particular interests. Nothing could induce Jayachandra to make common cause with Prithviraja against the Muslim conqueror who destroyed them both. The Muslims were better organised; they were imbued with missionary zeal and never shrank from any sacrifice however great in the service of their religion. There was no caste system among the Muslims and no artificial barriers to divide one group of men from another. All were brothers within the fold of Islam. A soldier who risked his life in battle did so in the full hope of obtaining the highest religious merit. No such feeling animated the Hindus, and the result was that their most valiant generals and soldiers were

often ranged in hostile camps, ready to destroy each other like kites and crows.

The Hindus relied too much upon their elephants, while the Muslims were well trained cavalry leaders. The old methods of warfare did not succeed against the fierce and fanatical warriors, who could constantly increase their strength by obtaining fresh recruits from the cooler regions beyond the Afghan hills. The Hindus outnumbered the Muslims, but lack of organisation and discipline, coupled with the treachery of their own men reduced their numerical superiority to a nullity. The masses lacked that keen sense of patriotism which leads men to sacrifice their lives for a cause. They showed an indifference to political revolutions which is a unique feature of Indian history. Conquerors came and went, but they pursued their normal work without realising the necessity of taking up arms to protect their country's honour and independence. Indeed fighting was the exclusive monopoly of a particular class, and when that class failed, there was no hope.

It is said the slave system prevalent among the Turks helped them greatly in their political schemes. The slave was often the survival of the fittest and could only retain his position by exceptional energy in war and skill in government. While sons of brilliant men were utter failures, the slaves did remarkably well, and ably maintained the traditions of fitness and efficiency bequeathed to them by their masters.

CHAPTER XXII

KHILJI IMPERIALISM

The throne of Delhi now passed into the hands of the Khilji Turks, and in a public *Durbar* held at Kilughari the soldiers and citizens all tendered fealty to the new Sultan. The contemporary historian Zia Barani says that Jalāl-ud-din came of a race different from the Turks, which shows that there was some opposition on the part of pure-bred Turks to his usurpation of power. Gradually he established his authority, and the "excellence of his character, his justice, his generosity, and devotion gradually removed the aversion of the people, and hopes of grants of land assisted in conciliating, though grudgingly and unwillingly, the affections of his people." Firuz was a good old man of seventy, who was unwilling to shed human blood, but his mildness and tenderness fostered sedition in the state and encouraged the spirit of rebellion and disorder. In the second year of the reign Balban's nephew Malik Chajjū, who held the fief of Kara, broke out into rebellion. He marched towards Delhi at the head of a considerable force, but when the royal army approached, his followers dispersed in fear. Those who were captured were brought before the Sultan who granted them a pardon and entrusted Kara to his nephew and son-in-law Alauddin.

Jalāl-ud-din Khilji, 1290–96 A.D.

The Sultan's foreign policy was as weak and timid as his domestic policy. The expedition against Ranthambhor failed, and the Sultan's army returned in

disappointment to the capital. Better success attended his arms when the Mongols invaded Hindustan under their leader Halāqū. They were defeated and massacred in large numbers. At last peace was made with them and they were allowed to settle near Delhi. This policy had disastrous consequences: for Mughalpur became a centre of intrigue and disaffection and caused much anxiety to the rulers of Delhi.

Alauddin's expedition to Devagiri, 1294 A.D.

Alauddin, the Sultan's nephew and son-in-law, had been entrusted with the fief of Kara and Oudh. Removed from the control of the Sultan, Alauddin, who was an ambitious man, conceived the bold project of making a raid upon Devagiri, which is one of the most memorable feats in the annals of mediæval India. He had heard of the fabulous wealth of Devagiri, the capital of the Yadava Rajas of Maharashtra, and eagerly longed to obtain possession of it.

He marched at the head of 8,000 horse and reached Elichpur not far from the frontiers of the Maratha kingdom. From Elichpur he proceeded towards Ghatilajaura, at a distance of twelve miles from Devagiri without encountering any opposition. When Ramachandra, the Raja of Devagiri, heard of the enemy's advance, he shut himself up in his fortress and resolved to face the attack of the Muslims. Meanwhile Alauddin's troops entered the town and levied a heavy contribution upon the merchants and bankers. Ramachandra was frightened by the rumour that the Sultan was also coming towards the Deccan at the head of 20,000 horse, and he offered to make peace. He agreed to pay a ransom of fifty *mans* of gold, seven *mans* of pearls, and other valuable things in addition to forty

elephants, some thousands of horses and the plunder which he had already collected from the city.

When Ramachandra's son Sankaradeva heard of this peace, he hastened to the rescue of his father and asked Alauddin to restore whatever booty he had seized from his father and to leave the province quietly. Alauddin treated this demand as an insult and proceeded to attack Sankara, leaving a thousand horse to invest the fort, but in the encounter that followed, the Maratha army defeated the Muslims and dispersed them in all directions. The arrival of the force which Alauddin had left to conduct the siege of the fort, infused a fresh hope into the Musalman army. A panic seized the Hindus, and they sustained a severe defeat. Enormous booty fell into the hands of the victorious general, who demanded the cession of Elichpur for the support of the garrison which he intended to leave behind. These terms having been accepted by Ramachandra, Alauddin returned to Kara in triumph.

The Sultan was delighted at the success of his nephew. Accompanied by a scanty retinue, he crossed the Ganges in a barge and met Alauddin with a few adherents. When the old man affectionately embraced him, he was murdered, and the royal party was put to the sword. The Sultan's head was paraded in the army, and Alauddin was proclaimed king of Delhi.

Alauddin's early difficulties.

On his accession to the throne Alauddin found himself confronted with a difficult situation. The Jalali nobles had not yet completely forgotten the murder of their good old chief, and secretly plotted to avenge it. The Queen-mother Malika Jahān, whom Barani describes as "one of the silliest of the silly," fomented

intrigues to push forward the claims of her own sons, Arkali Khan and Qadr Khan. The hostile nobles and Amirs were conciliated by lavish gifts and promotions to high office, while the common people were reconciled to the new regime by means of gold. Malika Jahān, who had raised to the throne Qadr Khan under the title of Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim, wrote to Arkali Khan at Multan asking him to come to Delhi, but he excused himself on the ground that the defection of the nobles had made the task of restoration absolutely impossible. When Alauddin reached near the capital, Rukn-ud-din Ibrahim came out of the city to oppose his progress, but in the middle of the night, the left wing of his army went over to the enemy. The prince, taking some bags full of gold *tankās* and a few horses from the stables, made off for Multan. Alauddin then made his triumphal entry into the plain of Siri, where he received the homage of all parties. Barani describes the situation in these words: "the throne was now secure, and the revenue officers and the keepers of elephants with their elephants, and the kotwals with the keys of the forts, and the magistrates and the chief men of the city came out to Alauddin, and a new order of things was established. His wealth and power were great; so whether individuals paid their allegiance or whether they did not, mattered little, for the Khutbā was read and coins were struck in his name."

Against the Mongols.

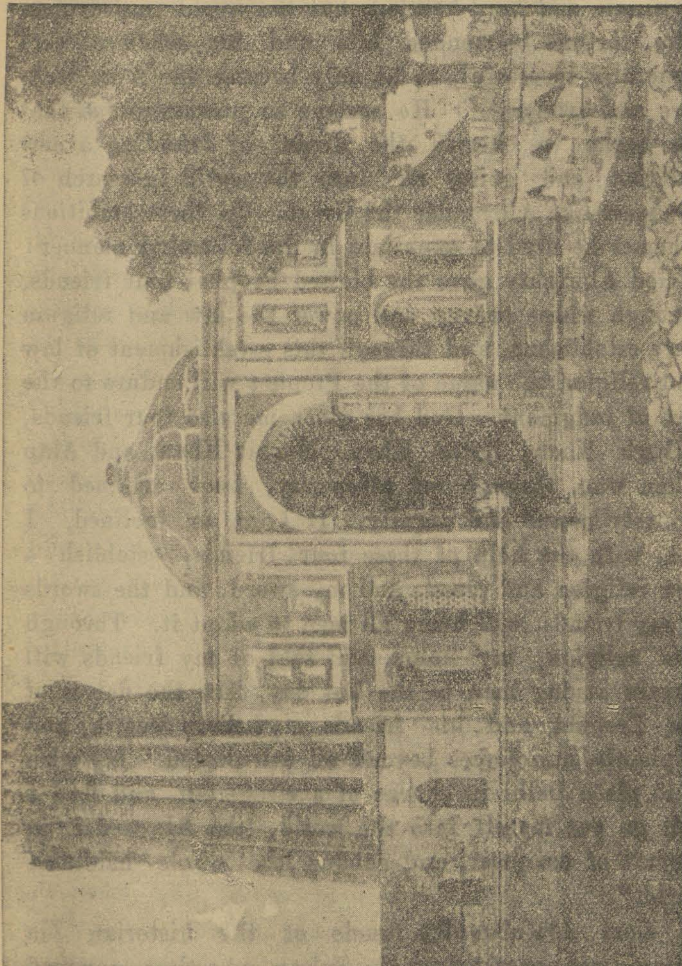
Having secured his power, Alauddin turned to combat the great danger of the ever-recurring Mongol raids. He completed the work of Balban and effectively garrisoned the frontier outposts of the kingdom. The Mongols came again and again, but they were repulsed

with heavy losses. In the second year of the reign, Amir Daud, the ruler of Transoxiana, advanced with an army of 100,000 Mongols with a view to conquer Multan, the Punjab and Sindh, but 'Ulugh Khan drove them back with heavy losses. The Mongols did not mind this defeat and appeared again under their leader Saldi. Zafar Khan marched against them and captured the Mongol Saldi and his 2,000 followers, and sent them in chains to Delhi. But the most dreadful invasion of the Mongols occurred in the year 1298, when Qutlugh Khwaja, at the head of a countless host, advanced against Delhi. A feeling of consternation spread among the population, and a war council was forthwith summoned by the Sultan to devise means of repelling the attack of the enemy. Zafar Khan and 'Ulugh Khan proceeded against them, and the Sultan himself took the field in person at the head of 12,000 well-equipped volunteers. The Mongols were defeated and dispersed, though Zafar Khan, the greatest warrior of the age, was slain in the thick of the fight. Just at this time, Targhi, another Mongol leader, appeared at the head of a considerable force, but the danger was averted through the good offices of Nizam-ud-din Aulia. Notwithstanding these reverses, the Mongol raids did not cease, and in 1304 Ali Beg and Khwaja Tāsh, marching to the north of Lahore and skirting the Siwalik hills, made an incursion into Hindustan and penetrated as far as Amroha. Ghazi Tughluq, who was warden of the marches at Dipalpur, marched against them and inflicted heavy losses upon them. This was followed by other raids, but Ghazi Tughluq again rose equal to the occasion and repulsed the invading hordes. When Iqbalmandā came with a large force, the Sultan sent an

army against him. He was defeated and slain and thousands of Mongols were massacred. Several of the Mongol Amirs who were commanders of one thousand or one hundred were captured alive and were trampled under the feet of elephants by the order of the Sultan. The Mongols were so frightened by his forays into their country that they never appeared again in Hindustan. To guard his dominions against the Mongols, the Sultan adopted the frontier policy of Balban. All old forts that lay on the route of the Mongols were repaired, and veteran commanders were appointed to look after them. The outposts of Samana and Dipalpur were garrisoned and kept in a state of defence. The royal army was considerably strengthened and in the workshops of the state engineers were employed to manufacture weapons of all kinds to fight against the enemy.

The grand designs of the Sultan.

Having got rid of these nomad hordes, Alauddin turned his attention to foreign conquest. 'Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan had conquered Gujarat and Nehrwala, and subjected the merchants of Cambay to a heavy blackmail. The Baghela Rajput, Karan, had fled from his country, leaving his wife and children to be captured by the invaders in 1297 A.D. From all sides came the news of success, and enormous booty flowed into the coffers of the Sultan. Barani writes: "All this prosperity intoxicated him. Vast desires and great aims far beyond him formed their germs in his brain, and he entertained fancies which had never occurred to any king before him. In his exaltation, ignorance and folly, he quite lost his head, forming the most impossible schemes and nourishing



Alai Darwaza.

the most extravagant desires. He was bad-tempered, obstinate and hard-hearted, but the world smiled upon him, fortune befriended him and his schemes were generally successful, so he only became the more reckless and arrogant." He became so presumptuous that he began to cherish the dream of founding a new religion and going out into the world in search of conquest like Alexander the Great. On these ambitious schemes he used to expatiate in the following manner: "God Almighty gave the blessed Prophet four friends, through whose energy and power the law and religion were established, and through this establishment of law and religion the name of the Prophet will endure to the day of judgment. God has given me also four friends, 'Ulugh Khan, Zafar Khan, Nusrat Khan, and Alap Khan who, through my prosperity, have attained to princely power and dignity. If I am so inclined, I can, with the help of these four friends, establish a new religion and creed; and my sword, and the swords of my friends, will bring all men to adopt it. Through this religion, my name and that of my friends will remain among men to the last day, like the names of the Prophet and his friends . . . I have wealth, and elephants, and forces beyond all calculation. My wish is to place Delhi in charge of a vicegerent, and then I will go out myself into the world, like Alexander, in pursuit of conquest, and subdue the whole habitable world."

Qazi Ala-ul-mulk, uncle of the historian Zia Barani, was consulted by the Sultan, who thus expressed his opinion on the subject: "Religion and law spring from heavenly revelation; they are never established by the plans and designs of men. From the days of Adam

till now they have been the mission of Prophets and Apostles, as rule and government have been the duty of kings. The prophetic office has never appertained to kings, and never will, so long as the world lasts, though some Prophets have discharged the functions of royalty. My advice is that Your Majesty should never talk about these matters. Your Majesty knows what rivers of blood Chingiz Khan made to flow in Muhammadan cities, but he never was able to establish the Mughal religion or institutions among Muhammadans. Many Mughals have turned Musalmans but no Musalman has ever become a Mughal." On the subject of conquest the Qazi thus expressed his opinion: "The second design is that of a great monarch for it is a rule among kings to seek to bring the whole world under their sway; but these are not the days of Alexander, and where will there be found a Wazir like Aristotle . .. There were two important undertakings open to the king, which ought to receive attention before all others. One is the conquest and subjugation of all Hindustan, of such places as Ranthambhor, Chittor, Chanderi, Malwa, Dhar and Ujjain, to the east as far as the Saryu, from the Siwalik to Jālor, from Multan to Darmila, from Pālam to Lahore and Dipalpur; these places should all be reduced to such obedience that the name of rebel should never be heard. The second and more important duty is that of closing the road of Multan against the Mughals." Before closing his speech, the Qazi said: "What I have recommended can never be accomplished unless Your Majesty gives up drinking to excess, and keeps aloof from convivial parties and feasts . . . If you cannot do entirely without wine, do not drink till the afternoon,

and then take it alone without companions." The Sultan appreciated the Qazi's advice and richly rewarded him.

Conquest of Rajputana.

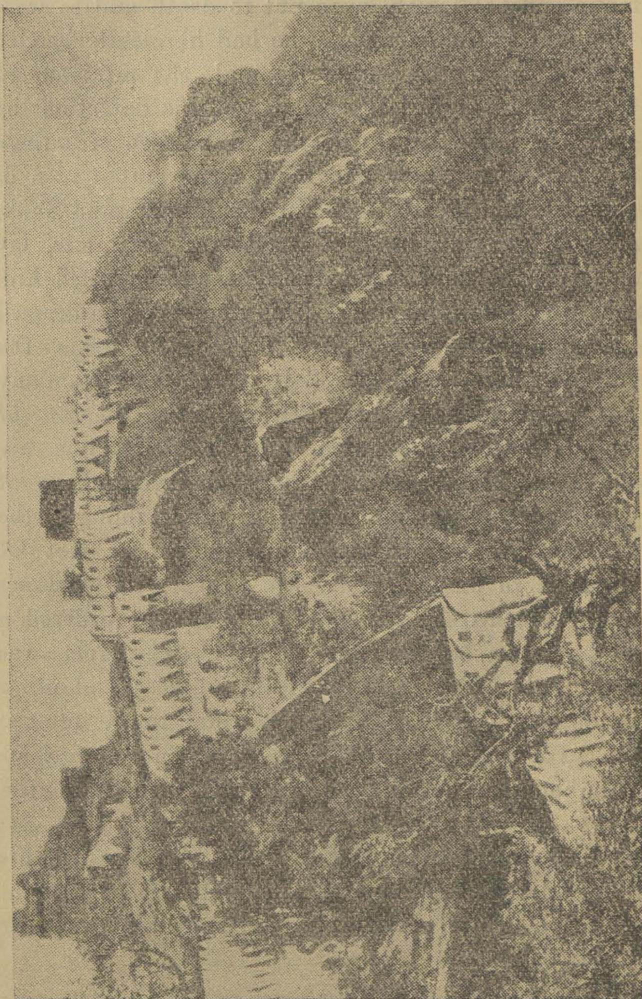
With the full concurrence of his ministers and generals, Alauddin now resolved to capture the famous fortress of Ranthambhor in 1299 A.D. 'Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan marched from their respective fiefs towards Rajputana at the head of a large army, and succeeded in capturing the fortress of Jhain. Ranthambhor was besieged, but during the siege the imperial commandant Nusrat Khan, while he was superintending the construction of a redoubt, was struck with a stone discharged from a catapult (*maghribi*) in the fort. The wound proved fatal, and the brave man succumbed to it after a couple of days. Rana Hammir came out of the fort, and in a short time drew to his banner 200,000 well-epuipped men, with whose help he delivered a tremendous attack upon the Muslims and compelled 'Ulugh Khan to fall back upon Jhain with heavy losses. When the news of this disaster reached the Sultan he proceeded in person towards Ranthambhor, but on his way he was attacked and wounded by his nephew Aqat Khan who wished to seize the throne with the help of some disaffected neo-Muslims. But his attempt failed and he was punished with death for his treason. There were other conspiracies to deprive the Sultan of his throne but they were successfully put down. Freed from this danger, the royalists concentrated their full vigour upon Ranthambhor, and the siege was pushed on for a whole year. By means of bags filled with sand, the besiegers escaladed the walls of the fortress and forcibly obtained possession of it.

Hammir and his family were put to death and so were the remnant of the garrison, who had heroically battled for their chief to the last.[1] Ranmal, the minister of the Rana, paid in full the penalty of his defection by suffering an ignominious death. But even in these bloody annals, we, now and then, come across men of true heroism and loyalty. When Mir Muhammad Shah, a Mongol general in the service of Hammir, lay wounded on the field of battle, Alauddin asked him what he would do if he ordered his wounds to be dressed and saved his life from peril. In scornful pride the vanquished hero replied, "If I recover from my wounds, I would have thee slain and raise the son of Hammir Deo upon the throne." Such fidelity was rare indeed in the Muslim camp, where an atmosphere of intrigue and self-seeking prevailed, and though the spirited warrior was thrown down under the feet of an elephant to be trampled unto death, the victor's heart was touched by his manliness, and he ordered a decent burial to be accorded to him. The fort was taken in July, 1301 A.D., and the palaces and other forts of the "stinking Rai" were razed to the ground. Having placed 'Ulugh Khan in charge of Ranthambhor and Jhain, the Sultan returned to the capital.

Emboldened by this success, Alauddin directed his forces against Mewar, the premier state of Rajputana. No Muslim ruler had yet ventured to penetrate

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[1] The frightful rite of "Jauhar" was performed, and in Amir Khusrau's words, one night the Rai lit a fire at the top of the hill, and threw his women and family into the flames, and rushing on the enemy with a few devoted adherents, they sacrificed their lives in despair.



Fort of Chitor.

into that secluded region, protected by long chains of mountains and deep forests. The physical features of Mewar rendered it difficult for any conqueror to bring it under his effective sway, and the fort of Chittor situated on a hill-top, strongly fortified by nature, had always defied the foreign invader. Cut out of a huge rock, the famous fortress stood in its awful grandeur, overlooking the vast plain below, where the Hindu and Muslim hosts were to engage each other in a death-grapple. But the impregnability of the fortress did not deter the ambitious Sultan from attempting its conquest, and in 1303 A.D. he marched his forces against Mewar. The immediate cause of the invasion according to Firishta and Tod was his passionate desire to obtain possession of Padmini, the peerless queen of Rana Ratan Singh, renowned for her beauty all over Hindustan. It is not necessary to repeat the oft-quoted story of the manner in which the Rana agreed to gratify the Sultan's wish by allowing him to behold the princess through the medium of mirrors, and the foul treachery of Alauddin in capturing him, when he accompanied him out of courtesy to the outer gate of the fortress. From his camp, he sent word to the Rani that her husband would be released if she chose to come into his harem. But how could the Rajputs brook this indelible stain upon their national honour? They debated amongst themselves as to the course which was to be adopted. Like a brave Rajput matron, more anxious for the honour of her race than for her own safety, the queen expressed her willingness to abide by their decision. She consented to go to the Muslim camp, and Alauddin, whose reason was clouded by lust, permitted her to do so in a manner befitting her rank

and dignity. Seven hundred covered litters containing brave Rajput warriors, well-equipped with arms, proceeded to the royal camp and demanded the strictest privacy. They rescued the Rana and carried him off to Chittor. A deadly fight raged at the outer gate of the fort, where the Rajputs bravely resisted the invaders, but, at last, they were overpowered. When they saw that there was no change of escape, they prepared to die after the manner of their race. The frightful rite of *jauhar* was performed and the fairest ladies of the royal family perished in the flames. Amir Khusrau, who accompanied the Sultan during this expedition, gives a detailed account of the siege but he says not a word about the queen of Mewar. He writes: "The fort of Chittor was taken on Monday, the 11th Muharram, 703 A.H. (August 26, 1303). The Rai fled, but afterwards surrendered himself. After ordering a massacre of thirty thousand Hindus he bestowed the government of Chittor upon his son Khizr Khan and named the place Khizrabad. He bestowed upon him a red canopy, a robe embroidered with gold and two standards—one green and the other black—and threw upon him rubies and emeralds. He then returned towards Delhi." All accounts agree that the fight before Chittor was terrible.

Some modern writers are of opinion that the story of Padmini is a pure myth and that Firishta has borrowed his account from Malik Muhammad Jayasi's poetical work, the *Padmāvat*. The contemporary writers make no mention of this romantic episode, but their silence is not enough to reject all later testimony. The subject deserves further investigation before any definite conclusion can be reached.

The fort was entrusted to Prince Khizr Khan and the town was re-named Khizrabad. Khizr Khan remained in Chittor for some time, but about the year 1311 he was obliged to leave it owing to the pressure of the Rajputs. The Sultan then made it over to the Sonigrā chief Maldeva who held it for seven years at the end of which period it was recovered by Rana Hammir by means of treachery and intrigue. Under Hammir Chittor once more regained its former splendour and became one of the premier states in Rajputana.

The fall of Chittor was followed by the submission of the Rai of Malwa, who fought against the armies of Islam at the head of a large force, but he was defeated and killed, and Malwa was placed in charge of a Muslim governor. Soon afterwards the cities of Mandu, Ujjain, Dharanagari and Chanderi were conquered, and their rulers were compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Khilji War-lord. By the end of 1305 A.D. practically the whole of Northern India came into the hands of Alauddin and the policy of imperialism, of which he was the author and champion, gathered a fresh momentum with every new conquest and annexation.

The Deccan—Conquest of Devagiri.

Having conquered Northern India the Sultan turned his attention to the Deccan. The physical features of the country, the hostility of the Hindu Rajas, the long distance from the capital of the empire—all made its permanent subjugation difficult, if not impossible. But Alauddin was not the man to flinch back from his resolve. He invested his slave Kāfūr with the supreme command of the royal forces.

On his way to the Deccan Kāfūr passed through Malwa and Gujarat and inflicted a crushing defeat upon Karan, the Baghela ruler, who was obliged to surrender owing to shortage of supplies. 'Ulugh Khan, the Sultan's brother, forcibly seized Devaldevi, the daughter of Rai Karan, who was admitted into the royal seraglio, and was afterwards married to Prince Khizr Khan, the heir-apparent. Kāfūr laid waste the whole country and secured the submission of Ramachandra Yādava who was sent to court. He was well received by the Sultan and was given the title of *Raya Rāyān*.

Conquest of Warangal.

The defeat of the Yādavas of Devagiri prepared the way for the fall of the other Hindu princes of the South. In 1309 A.D. Kāfūr started on his expedition against the Kākatiya Rajas of Warangal[2] in Telingana. Marching through difficult and inhospitable regions he reached before the fort of Warangal. Raja Pratap Rudra Deva, called Ladar Deo by Muslim historians, shut himself up in the fort and offered stubborn resistance. After a prolonged siege Pratap Rudra Deva Kākatiya submitted and sued for peace. He agreed to pay annual tribute and "sent a golden image of himself, with a gold chain round its neck in acknowledgment of his submission"; but Kāfūr refused to listen to his overtures. In vain did the Brahman plenipotentiaries of the Kākatiya prince plead for quarter for their master. The relentless general promised to desist from a general masacre of the Hindus only on the condition that their chief should give up all his treasures and agree to send tribute annually to Delhi.

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[2] Warangal was the ancient capital of Telingana.

Driven to extremities, Pratap Rudra Deva accepted the humiliating conditions, and purchased his safety by offering a large booty. Kāfūr, with the laurels of victory on his brow, " left Warangal and returned to Delhi with a thousand camels, groaning under weight of treasure," in March, 1310, by way of Devagiri, Dhar, and Jhain.

Conquest of Mábar.

The success which attended this expedition and the vast wealth that flowed into the coffers of the state as the result of his enterprises, strengthened Alauddin's belief in his destiny, and he resolved to extend the limits of his empire to the furthest extremity of the South. Dvārasamudra and Mábar[3] still remained outside the pale of his empire. Under Vīra Ballāla III, the son of Nara Siṁha, the Hoysala dominions above and below the Ghāts had been reunited; and this powerful ruler held sway over the whole of Kangū and a portion of the Konkan and the whole of what is now known as the Mysore country.[4] Ballāla was a capable prince, who, like the other Hindu princes of his day had consolidated his power by abolishing vexatious imposts and granting charitable religious endowments. Bitter rivalry existed between the Hoysalas and the Yādavas, and each tried to ruin the other. At last these mutual feuds disabled both of them, and made room for a third power, namely, the Muslims. On November 18, 1310

3 Mábar is the name given to the strip of land which according to Wassāf, Polo and Abul Feda extended from Kulam to Nilāwar (Nellore). Wassāf writes in his *Tazriyāt-ul-Amsar* that Mábar extended from Kulam to Nilāwar (Nellore) nearly three hundred parasangs along the sea-coast. (Elliot, III, p. 32.)

4 Vīra Ballāla was crowned in 1292 A.D., and died fighting against the Turks in 1334 A.D.

A.D., the royal army under the leadership of Kafur left Delhi, and having crossed deep rivers, ravines, and mountain valleys, reached the country of Mábar. Vīra Ballāla suffered a crushing defeat and surrendered himself to the victorious general. But Kāfūr was not satisfied with mere surrender; he informed the Rai that he must either embrace Islam or accept the position of a *Zimmi*.[5] The Rai accepted the latter alternative, paid a huge war indemnity, and became a vassal of Delhi. The Muslims captured a large booty, which consisted of 36 elephants and an abundant quantity of gold, silver, jewels, and pearls. Vīra Ballāla was sent to Delhi along with the elephants and horses, and a reference to this visit occurs in his inscriptions.

Kāfūr next turned against the Pandyas of Madura. What gave the Muslims their long-desired opportunity was a quarrel between the two brothers Sundara Pandya and Vira Pandya, an illegitimate son of the ruler of the Pandya kingdom. He set out for the Deccan at the head of a large army. Amir Khusrau in his *Tarikh-i-Alai* gives a graphic account of the progress of this valiant general through the distant and inaccessible regions of the South. On his way he seized elephants and demolished temples at several places. When he reached Madura, the Rai fled in fear, leaving his baggage to be captured by the enemy. It appears Kāfūr reached as far as Rāmeśvaram, a well-known place of Hindu pilgrimage. The great temple was plundered, the idol destroyed, after which Kāfūr returned to Delhi towards the close of the year 1311

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5 A *Zimmi* is an unbeliever who does not accept Islam, but for a monetary consideration is allowed security of life and property.

A.D. Having subdued the whole country, Kāfūr returned to Delhi, laden with the spoils of war, and was accorded a cordial welcome by the Sultan. The victory was proclaimed from the pulpits, and rich rewards were distributed among the nobles and officers of the empire.

Defeat of Śankara Deva.

After Rāma Deva's death his son Śankara Deva had ceased to pay the customary tribute and had refused to fulfil the obligations of an ally during Kāfūr's expedition against the Hoysalas. Alauddin's wrath was kindled at this breach of faith and for the fourth time the slave-warrior was sent to the Deccan at the head of a large force in 1312 A.D. The whole of Mahārāshtra was ravaged, and the Yādava prince was, after a feeble resistance, defeated and beheaded. The whole of South India now lay at the feet of Kāfūr, and the ancient dynasties of the Cholas, the Cheras, the Pandyas, the Hoysalas, the Kākatiyas, and the Yādavas were all overthrown, and made to acknowledge the suzerainty of Delhi. By the end of 1312 Alauddin's empire embraced the whole of the north and the south, and all the leading princes owned his sway.

Alauddin's theory of kingship.

Alauddin was opposed to the interference of the *ulama* in matters of state, and in this respect he departed from the traditions of the previous rulers of Delhi. The law was to depend upon the will of the monarch, and had nothing to do with the law of the Prophet—this was the guiding maxim of the new monarch. The Sultan's political theory is clearly set forth in the words which he addressed to Qazi Mughis-ud-din, whom he consulted about the legal position of

the sovereign power in the state. He upheld the royal prerogative of punishment and justified the mutilation of dishonest and corrupt officers, though the Qazi declared it contrary to canon law. Then the Sultan asked him, "That wealth which I acquired while I was a Malik, with so much bloodshed at Devagiri, does it belong to me or to the public treasury?" The Qazi replied, "I am bound to speak the truth to your Majesty. The treasure obtained at Devagiri was obtained by the prowess of the army of Islam, and whatever treasure is so acquired belongs to the public treasury.[6] If your Majesty had gained it yourself alone in a manner allowed by the law, then it would belong to you." The Sultan flew into a rage and asked the Qazi how such treasure could belong to the state. The Qazi meekly answered, "Your Majesty has put to me a question of law; if I were not to say what I have read in the book, and your Majesty to test my opinion were to ask some other learned man, and his reply, being in opposition to mine, should show that I had given a false opinion to suit your Majesty's pleasure, what confidence would you have in me, and would you ever afterwards consult me about the law?"

The Qazi was confronted with a fresh question about the rights of the king and his children upon the public treasury, the *Bet-ul-māl*. Frightened by the Sultan's stern demeanour, the Qazi screwed up courage with great difficulty to return a reply and said, "If your Majesty will follow the example of the most enlightened Khalifās, and will act upon the highest principle, then you will take for yourself and your

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[6] The public treasury is called the '*Bet-ul-māl*' in legal language.

establishment the same sum as you have allotted to each fighting man, two hundred and thirty-four tankās. If you would rather take a middle course and should think that you would be disgraced by putting yourself on a par with the army in general, then you may take for yourself and your establishment as much as you have assigned to your chief officers, such as Malik Kirān and others. If your Majesty follows the opinions of politicians, then you will draw from the treasury more than any other great man receives, so that you may maintain a greater expenditure than any other, and not suffer your dignity to be lowered. I have put before your Majesty three courses, and all the crores of money and valuables which you take from the treasury and bestow upon your women you will have to answer for on he day of account." The Sultan was filled with wrath and threatened the Qazi with severe punishment. When he again recounted his proceedings, the Qazi placed his forehead on the ground and cried with a loud voice, "My liege! whether you send me, your wretched servant, to prison, or whether you order me to be cut in two, all this is unlawful, and finds no support in the sayings of the Prophet, or in the expositions of the learned." The exponent of the canon law knew that his fate was sealed, but to his utter astonishment when he went to court the next day, the Sultan treated him kindly and handsomely rewarded him. With a politeness, which was agreeably surprising, he explained to the Qazi his doctrine of kingship in these significant words:—"To prevent rebellion in which thousands perish, I issue such orders as I conceive to be for the good of the state, and the benefit of the people. Men are heedless, disrespectful, and disobey my commands.

I am then compelled to be severe to bring them into obedience. *I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful: whatever I think to be for the good of the state, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree and as for what may happen to me on the approaching day of Judgment that I know not.*" This new doctrine of sovereignty was the outcome of the circumstances of the time. The people readily acquiesced in it and cared nothing for the claims of the *ulama*. They tamely submitted to him because he gave them the much coveted gifts of peace and order. The support which he received from public opinion made him irresistible as long as he lived.

He stamps out sedition.

Alauddin brought to bear upon his methods of administration ability and insight, which we rarely find in men endowed with mere military genius. Rebellions and conspiracies roused him from his lethargy and convinced him of the necessity of undertaking drastic measures to put an end to sedition in the state. He calmly sat down to find out the causes of political disorders and came to the conclusion that they were due to four things: (1) the Sultan's disregard of the affairs of the nation, (2) wine-drinking, (3) friendship and frequent social intercourse of the Maliks, Amirs, and grandees of the empire, and (4) superfluity of wealth which intoxicated men's minds and fostered treason and disaffection.

This searching analysis led to a highly repressive legislation, and the first measure which the Sultan undertook was the confiscation of property. All gratuities, pensions, and endowments were confiscated to the state, and all the villages that were held as *milk*

(in proprietary right) or *inām* (in free gift), or *waqf* (as charitable endowment) were resumed and incorporated with the crown lands. The fear of conspiracy and murder upset the Sultan and led him to establish an elaborate system of espionage, by which he tried to keep himself informed of the doings of his officials and subjects. The spies reported everything that took place in the houses of the nobles, and often in their zeal to win royal favour, they carried the silly gossips of the bazar to the ears of the emperor. Spirituous liquor was strictly forbidden; and the Sultan himself set an example by giving up the habit of drink. All the china and glass vessels of the Sultan's banqueting room were broken into fragments, and "jars and casks of wine were brought out of the royal cellars, and emptied at the Badayun gate in such abundance, that mud and mire was produced as in the rainy season." But this regulation weighed too heavily upon the people, and wine was secretly brought into the city by vintners. The nobles were permitted to drink individually at their houses, but all social intercourse was strictly prohibited. All festive gatherings and convivial parties were forbidden in private as well as public houses with the inevitable result that the amenities of social life disappeared, and life became an intolerable burden.

Treatment of the Hindus.

The Hindus were treated with special severity. In the Doab they had to pay 50 per cent of the total produce of their land without making any deductions, and so rigorous was the assessment that not even a *biswah* of land was spared. A grazing tax was imposed upon cattle, and a house-tax was also levied. The same

regulations were applied to the *khūts* and the *balāhars*[7] so as to save the poor from the heavy burden of taxation. So rigorously were the new rules enforced, 'that the *chaudhrīs*, *khūs*, and *muqaddams* were not able to ride on horseback, to find weapons, to get fine clothes, or to indulge in betel.' The policy of the state was that the Hindus should not have so much as to enable them to ride on horseback, wear fine clothes, carry arms and cultivate luxurious habits. They were reduced to a state of abject misery to such an extent that the wives of the *khūts* and *muqaddams* went and served for hire in the houses of the Musalmans. Barani speaks highly of the Wazir of the empire and says that he brought all the provinces under one revenue law as if they were all one village. He investigated all cases of embezzlement and inflicted the severest punishments upon the wrong-doers. If the ledger of the *patwari* showed a single *jital* standing against the name of any officer, he was punished with torture and imprisonment. The post of revenue clerk came to be looked upon as dangerous and only the bolder spirits offered themselves as candidates for it.[8]

The Sultan's policy towards the Hindus is contained in the reply which he gave to the Qazi: "Oh, doctor, thou art a learned man, but thou hast had no experience; I am an unlettered man, but I have seen a

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7 *Khūt* and *balāhar* are obviously used for landed classes. Most probably they are used here for landlords and tenants. [Elliot, III (Appendix), p. 623.]

8 Barani writes (Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth. Ind., p. 289) that the office of revenue clerk fell into such bad odour that nobody would give his daughter in marriage to him and the post of *mushrif* was accepted only by those who did not pay any heed to their lives. These men were frequently cast in prison.

great deal; be assured then that the Hindus will never become submissive and obedient till they are reduced to poverty. I have, therefore, given orders that just sufficient shall be left to them from year to year, of corn, milk, and curds, but that they shall not be allowed to accumulate hoards and property."

Alauddin was a true militarist. He saw clearly that his empire could not be maintained without a permanent standing army. With this object in view he undertook military reform. He fixed the pay of a soldier at 234 tankās a year and that of a man with two horses at 78 tankās more But it was impossible to maintain a large army unless the necessaries of life were cheapened. For this reason the Sultan fixed the prices of all commodities required for daily use. Grain was to be stored in royal granaries and in the Khalsa villages of the Doab, the revenue of the state was realised not in cash but in kind. The prices of all articles of food were fixed and the shopkeepers were severely punished if they did not observe these regulations. Spies and agents were employed who reported to the Sultan the condition of the market.

Organisation of the army and the control of the market.

All merchants, whether Hindus or Musalmans, had to register themselves and to enter into engagements by which they bound themselves to bring their articles to the *Serai adl*, an open space inside the Badaon gate where all articles were exposed for sale. Advances were made from the treasury to these wealthy and respectable Multani traders to enable them to purchase goods in large quantities. The Diwan issued permits to those Maliks and Amirs who purchased costly articles. This device was adopted to prevent merchants from

buying articles in the market at cheap rates and then selling them at higher rates in the country.

The market was superintended by two officers—the *Diwan-i-riyāsat* and the *Shahnā-i-mandi*. These officers performed their duties with the strictest honesty and regularity. The cattle market was also controlled, and the price of cattle fell considerably. Horses of the first class could be purchased for 100 to 120 tankās, of the second for 80 to 90, of the third for 65 to 70 tankās, while small ponies could be had for 10 to 25 tankās. A milch cow could be had for three or four tankās and a she-goat for ten or twelve or fourteen *jitals*. The prices of slaves and maid-servants fell considerably. The punishments for the violation of the tariff laws were exceptionally severe. If the shopkeepers weighed less, an equal quantity of flesh was cut off from their haunches to make up the deficiency in weight. The vendors were frequently kicked out of their shops for dishonest dealings. The result of all this was that the bazar people became quite submissive and ceased to practise deceit and often gave more than the fixed quantity.

The results of reform.

These reforms succeeded well enough. The increased strength and efficiency of the army guaranteed security against Mongol invasions, and held in check the refractory Rajas and chieftains. All sedition was stamped out, and men's habits were so disciplined that crime was considerably lessened. The cheapness of the necessaries of life increased the happiness of the people, and bound them more closely to the personal despotism of the emperor. Though the stress of war pressed too severely upon the resources of the state,

numerous works of public utility were constructed, and the emperor extended his patronage to the learned and the pious. Amir Khusrau, the poet-laureate of the empire, shed lustre on his reign, and pious men like Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Aulia and Shaikh Rukn-ud-din did not a little to augment its prestige, but the most important result of these measures was the solidity which they imparted to the central government. The disorderly habits of the grandees of the empire were put down with a high hand, and all particularism was kept under firm control. The governors in the distant provinces obeyed the orders of the emperor with perfect obedience. The agents of the government were allowed no freedom of action, and the disregard of the royal will was treated as a grave offence for which severe punishments were laid down.

Weakness of the system.

The foundations of the political system which Alauddin had built up were unsound. The new discipline which he had imposed upon the people drove discontent deep underground. The Hindu Rajas, who had been deprived of their independence, sullenly brooded over their losses and waited for an opportunity to strike a blow for their freedom. The nobles, accustomed to a life of gaiety, were sick of the obnoxious laws which they had to obey; the merchants resented the policing of the market, while the Hindus groaned under the humiliations inflicted upon them. The new Muslims always plotted and intrigued against the Sultan. Over-centralisation, repression, and espionage, all undermined the imperial authority. As the emperor advanced in years, he became violent and whimsical, and his suspicious nature estranged from

him the sympathies of his leading nobles. To form a class of officials entirely dependent on himself, he raised base-born men to positions of honour and eminence. Too much depended upon the personality of the Sultan in this age; and Alauddin made the mistake of minimising the importance of this powerful factor in the politics of his day. He neglected the education of his sons, and under Kāfūr's influence he treated them with great severity. Besides, Kāfūr secretly intrigued to obtain power for himself. He induced the emperor to execute a will nominating his son, Shihab-ud-din, heir to the throne. The authority of the emperor ceased to command respect, and rebellions broke out in the outlying provinces of the empire. In the words of the Muslim chronicler, "Fortune proved, as usual, fickle; and destiny drew her poniard to destroy him," and the mighty monarch 'bit his own flesh with fury, as he saw the work of his lifetime being undone before his eyes.' In the midst of these distressing circumstances the emperor, who was already in the grip of a mortal disease, died in 1316 and was buried in a tomb in front of the Jam-i-Masjid.

Estimate of Alauddin.

Alauddin was by nature a cruel and implacable despot. He swept aside the dictates of religious and canon law, if they interfered with his policy. He had no regard for kinship and inflicted punishments without distinction. He possessed the qualities of a born military leader and a civil administrator and kept his vast possessions under firm control as long as he lived. He clearly saw the dangers of his time and guarded against them. He enjoyed the confidence of his soldiers and his example fired their zeal. In organising his

civil administration he displayed great originality and mental vigour, and his control of the market is one of the marvels of mediæval statesmanship. He ruled with a strong hand and exercised personal supervision over the conduct of his officials. No one was allowed to take a pice from the cultivators and fraudulent practices were severely checked. He was himself illiterate but extended his patronage to the learned and pious, and granted stipends and lands for their maintenance. Among the early Muslim rulers he was the first who had the courage to oppose the orthodox policy of the *ulama*, and who represented in his person to the fullest extent the virility and vigour of Islam.

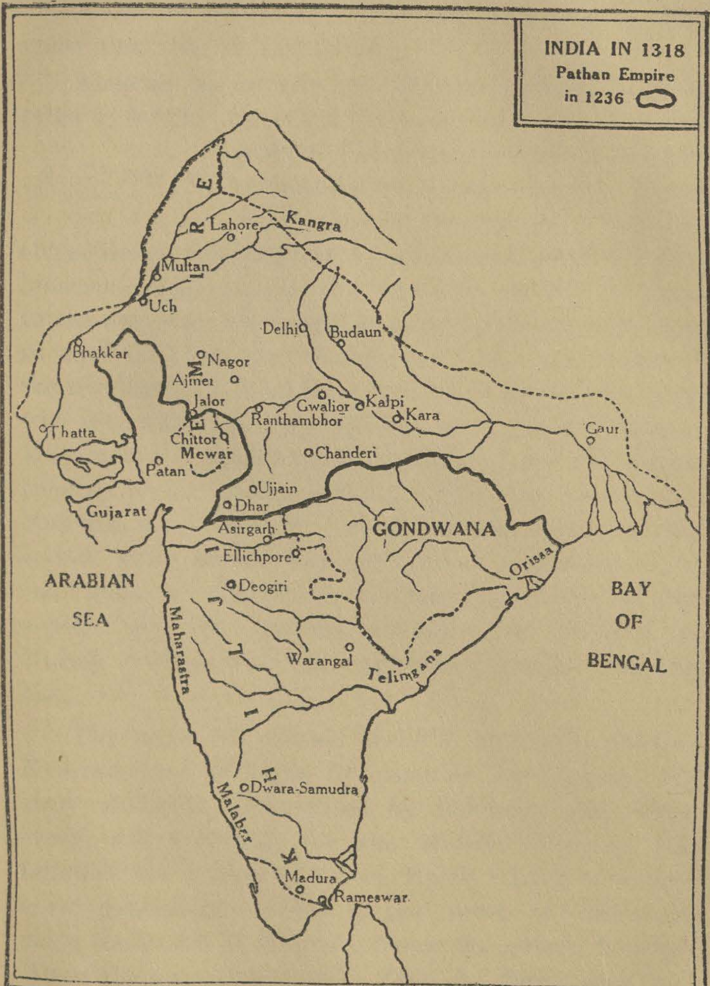
The weak successors of Alauddin.

Alauddin's death was a signal for civil war and the scramble of rival parties for power. Malik Kāfūr removed from his path the princes of the blood royal one by one and produced a spurious will of the late Sultan in which Omar Khan was nominated heir to the throne. As Omar was a little child of six years of age, Kāfūr himself became regent and began to manage the affairs of the state. The first thing he did was to destroy the survivors of Alauddin. All the princes except Mubārak Khan were put in prison or murdered, and Kāfūr bestowed the highest offices on his favourites. This policy caused discontent among the supporters of the old regime. A conspiracy was formed, and the slaves of Alauddin with the help of the army killed Kāfūr and his leading partisans. After Kāfūr's death Mubārak Khan succeeded to the throne under the title of Qutbuddin Mubārak Shah in 1316 A.D.

Mubārak began his reign well. He released the political prisoners, restored the confiscated lands to their owners and abolished the numerous taxes which clogged the progress of trade and industry. Barani writes that the regulations of Alauddin fell into disuse, and men reverted to their old ways and habits. But there was no serious rebellion except that of Raja Harapala Deva of Devagiri in 1318; it was quickly suppressed and the rebel was flayed alive. Khusrau, a man of low caste from Gujarat, who had become a special favourite of the Sultan, undertook an expedition to Telingana which met with great success. The Rai submitted and ceded to Khusrau five districts and promised to pay an annual tribute of 'more than a hundred strong elephants as large as demons, 12,000 horses, and gold, jewels and gems beyond compute.'

Qutbuddin Mubārak Shah.

Good fortune spoiled Mubārak. He became proud, vindictive, and tyrannical and indulged in the worst excesses. He lost all regard for decency and morality and often appeared in public in the company of harlots. There was a great demand for dancing girls and the price of a boy or handsome eunuch, or beautiful girl varied from 500 to 1,000 and 2,000 tankās. The Sultan cast all decency to the winds when he allowed his unworthy associates to insult in foul and obscene language the distinguished nobles of the court. Khusrau's influence increased every day, and he conspired with his castemen to bring about the king's death. The Sultan was informed of Khusrau's evil intentions, but he paid no heed to the advice of his well-wishers. One night the conspirators entered the palace and murdered the Sultan. A court was hastily improvised


INDIA IN 1318
Pathan Empire
in 1236
EMPIRE
KHILJI
Lahore
Kangra
Multan
Uch
Delhi
Budaun
Bhakkar
Nagor
Ajmer
Jalor
Gwalior
Kalpi
Kara
Ranthambhor
Thatta
Chittor
Mewar
Patan
Chanderi
Gaur
Ujjain
Dhar
Gujarat
Asirgarh
GONDWANA
Ellichpore
Orissa
ARABIAN
SEA
Deogiri
BAY
OF
BENGAL
Maharastra
Warangal
Telimgana
Dwara-Samudra
Malabar
Madura
Rameswar

at midnight hour, and with the forced consent of the nobles and officers Khusrau mounted the throne in 1320 under the title of Nāsiruddin.

A Dynastic Revolution.

Khusrau began what the Muslim historians call a reign of terror. He seized the treasures of the state and conferred lavish gifts upon the people at large to win their support. Islam was trsated with contempt, and the old nobles and officers had to make room for Khusrau's kinsmen. The Alai nobles who had served the state in the past were filled with grief at this deplorable state of affairs. There was one among them who planned the overthrow of Khusrau. He was Fakhruddin Jūnā, who afterwards ascended the throne under the title of Muhammad Tughluq. He communicated everything to his father Ghazi Malik, the Warden of the Marches at Depalpur. The veteran warrior was moved with indignation and swore vengeance upon the 'unclean' *Parwārīs.*' He was joined by all the nobles of the empire except the governor of Multan who bore a personal grudge against him.

The news of Ghazi Malik's approach alarmed Khusrau, and he began to organise his forces. The army of Delhi, demoralised by indolence and debauchery, was no match for the sturdy. Muslims who followed the banner of Ghazi Malik. Lack of experienced generalship, added to the want of discipline, made the cause of Khusrau, from the outset, hopeless. When the two armies came face to face, each side began to plan dexterous manœuvres to overpower the other. The rickety forces of Khusrau were routed, and fled in confusion. The cause of the Parwārīs was

doomed, and they were so frightened that 'hardly any life was left in their bodies.'

Khusrau fled from the field of battle, but he was captured and beheaded. All his supporters were diligently traced out and were made to suffer the fate which they so richly merited. Having reached Delhi, Ghazi Malik enquired if there was any survivor of Alauddin's family. The assembled nobles replied in the negative and with one voice urged him to assume the imperial sceptre. Zia Barani who is an orthodox chronicler gives expression to his feelings of joy in these words: "Islam was rejuvenated and a new life came into it. The clamour of infidelity sank to the ground. Men's minds were satisfied and their hearts contented. All praise for Allah."

CHAPTER XXIII

THE TUGHLUQ DYNASTY

(1320—1412 A.D.)

Ghazi Malik, the Warden of the Marches, ascended the throne under the title of Ghiyasuddin Tughluq.

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq, 1320—25 A.D.

He was a man of humble origin; his father was a Qaraunā Turk,[1] and his mother was a Jat woman of the Punjab. He had risen to high position by dint of personal merit, and in the time of Alauddin had played an important part in wars against the Mongols whom he had chased out of the country again and again. When he assumed the reins of office, the empire of Delhi was in a state of confusion, and it was with great tact, prudence, and firmness that Ghiyas restored order and recovered the moral prestige of the monarchy. The magnanimity of his nature showed itself in the generous treatment which he meted out to the relatives of Alauddin. He made a suitable provision for them and appointed them to high offices in the state. No just claim was ignored and no past service was forgotten. The claims of rank and birth were respected, and many families that had been ruined were restored to their former dignity.

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1 Ibn Batūtā writes that he heard from Shaikh Ruknuddin Multani that Sultan Tughluq was of the stock of Qaraunā Turks who lived in the mountainous region between Sindh and Turkistan. In his early life he was very poor and was obliged to take up service under some merchant in Sindh. Later he joined the army, and by sheer dint of merit rose to high position.

Expedition against Warangal.

Having settled the affairs of the empire, Ghiyas ordered an expedition against Warangal, the capital of the Kākatiya Rajas of Telingana. Pratap Rudra Deva II had greatly increased his power during the reign of Mubārak Khilji. The Crown Prince was sent at the head of a large force to deal with him. After a desperate fight the Raja surrendered, and the whole country was subdued. The glory and greatness of the Kākatiyas ended, and henceforward they ceased to exist as a predominant power in Southern India.

Administration of Ghiyas.

The administration of Ghiyas was based upon the principles of justice and moderation. The land revenue was organised and the Sultan took great care to prevent abuses. The jagirs granted by Khusrau were resumed and the finances of the state were set in order. The cultivators were treated well, and officials were severely punished for their misconduct. The departments of justice and police worked efficiently, and the greatest security prevailed in the remotest parts of the empire. The army was also organised. The soldiers were treated with kindness and liberality. Strict discipline was enforced and arms and weapons were amply provided.

Death of Ghiyas.

Towards the close of his reign in 1324 the Sultan marched towards Bengal to restore to the throne the Princes of Lakhnauti, who had been expelled by their brother Bahadur. Bahadur was punished, and the dispossessed princes were reinstated in their territory. When the Sultan returned to Delhi, he was killed by

the fall of a pavilion which his son, Prince Jūnā, had erected near Afghanpur at a distance of six miles from the capital in 1325. The prince was suspected of having planned the emperor's death, for the hasty construction of such a palace was entirely superfluous. Whatever the real truth may be, there are strong reasons for thinking that the Sultan's death was the result of a conspiracy in which the Crown Prince took part, and not of accident.

Estimate of Ghiyas-ud-din.

Ghiyas was a mild and benevolent ruler. He loved simplicity, and towards his quondam colleagues, he behaved with the same frank joviality which had characterised him in his earlier days. A pious and peace-loving Muslim, he practised rigidly the observances of his faith, and always tried to promote the welfare of his co-religionists. Unlike many other Muslim rulers he lived a pure life and eschewed every kind of pleasure. As long as he lived he took the best care of his subjects and ruled with a strong hand. A new life was infused into the administration which had been thrown out of gear during the reigns of the imbecile Mubārak and the 'unclean' Khusrau. The following verse of Amir Khusrau is illustrative of the Sultan's excellent methods of government:

> "He never did anything that was not replete with wisdom and sense,
> He might be said to wear a hundred doctors' hoods under his crown."

Personality of Muhammad.

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq was succeeded by his son, Prince Jūnā under the title of Muhammad Tughluq, in 1325 A.D. He was unquestionably the ablest man among the crowned heads of the middle ages. Of all

kings, who had sat upon the throne of Delhi since the Muslim conquest, he was undoubtedly the most learned and accomplished. Nature had endowed him with a marvellous memory, a keen and penetrating intellect, and an enormous capacity for assimilating knowledge of all kinds. The versatility of his genius took by surprise all his contemporaries. A lover of the fine arts, a cultured scholar and an accomplished poet, he was equally at home in logic, astronomy, mathematics, philosophy, and the physical sciences. No one could excel him in composition and calligraphy; he had at his command a good deal of Persian poetry, of which he made a very extensive use in his writings and speeches. He was an adept in the use of similes and metaphors, and his literary productions were saturated with the influence of the Persian classics. Even the most practised rhetoricians found it difficult to rival the brilliance of his imagination, the elegance of his taste, and his command over the subtleties and niceties of expression. He was a master of dialectics, well-versed in Aristotelian logic and philosophy, and theologians and rhetoricians feared to argue with him. Barani describes him as an eloquent and profoundly learned scholar, a veritable wonder of creation, whose abilities would have taken by surprise such men as Aristotle and Āsaf.[2] He was highly generous, and all contemporary writers are unanimous in extolling his lavish gifts to the numerous suppliants who crowded his gate at all times. He was a strict Muslim who rigidly practised and enforced the observances laid

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[2] Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth. Ind., p. 461.

down in the Holy Book. But he was not an unrelenting bigot like some of his predecessors. His liberalism is reflected in his desire to be tolerant towards the Hindus and in his humane attempt to introduce ameliorative reforms like the suppression of *Sati* which was in vogue in the fourteenth century.

The Moorish traveller, Ibn Batūtā, who came to India in 1333 A.D., thus describes the Sultan: "Muhammad is a man who, above all others, is fond of making gifts and shedding blood. There may always be seen at his gate some poor person becoming rich, or some loving one condemned to death. His generous and brave actions, and his cruel and violent deeds, have obtained notoriety among the people. In spite of this, he is the most humble of men, and the one who exhibits the greatest equity. The ceremonies of his religion are dear to his heart, and he is very severe in respect of prayer and the punishment which follows its neglect. He is one of those kings whose good fortune is great and whose happy success exceeds the ordinary limit; but his distinguishing character is generosity. I shall mention among the instances of his liberality, some marvels, of which the like has never been reported of any of the princes who have preceded him."

Superficially viewed, the Sultan seems to be an amazing compound of contradictions. But he is not really so. The charges of blood-thirstiness and madness, brought against him by later writers, are mostly unfounded. No contemporary writer gives the barest indication of the Sultan's madness. The charge of blood-thirstiness was bolstered up by the members of the clerical party whom the Sultan treated with open

disregard. It is true, he was, like all mediæval despots, subject to great paroxysms of rage, and inflicted the most brutal punishments upon those who offended against his will, irrespective of the rank or order to which they belonged; but this is quite a different thing from stigmatising him as a born tyrant, taking delight in the shedding of human blood. A close examination of the alleged murders and atrocities of the Sultan will reveal the unsoundness of the common view that he found pleasure in the destruction of human species and organised 'man-hunts.' The truth is that the Sultan combined a headstrong temper with advanced ideals of administrative reform, and when his subjects failed to respond to his wishes, his wrath became terrible. His impatience was the result of popular apathy, just as popular apathy was the outcome of his startling innovations.

Taxation in the Doab.

The earliest administrative measure, which the Sultan introduced, was the enhancement of taxation in the Doab. Barani says that 'it operated to the ruin of the country and the decay of the people,' while another historian, who is more cautious in his remarks, says that 'the duties levied on the necessaries of life, realised with the utmost rigour, were too great for the power of industry to cope with.' The taxes in the Doab were raised, according to Barani, out of all proportion to the income of the people, and some oppressive *abwabs* (cesses) were also invented, which broke the back of the ryot, and reduced him to utter poverty and misery. All historians dwell upon the distress which was caused by this fiscal measure, and Barani, whose native district, Baran, also suffered from the effects of this en-

hancement, bitterly inveighs against the Sultan. He greatly exaggerates the suffering and misery caused to the population, when he says that the ryots of distant lands, on hearing of the distress and ruin of the people in the Doab, broke out into open rebellion, and threw off their allegiance. Unfortunately, this measure was carried out at a time when a severe famine was prevailing in the Doab, and the distress of the people was greatly aggravated by its disastrous effects. But this does not exonerate the Sultan altogether from blame; for his officials continued to levy taxes at the enhanced rate with the utmost rigour, and made no allowance for famine. It was long afterwards that he ordered wells to be dug and loans to be advanced to agriculturists to promote cultivation in the affected areas. The remedy came too late; the famished population, whose patience was sorely tried by the long duration of the famine, failed to profit by it, and gave up the ghost in sheer despair. Never were benevolent schemes of reform more cruelly frustrated by an evil fate than in the case of Muhammad Tughluq.

Transfer of the capital, 1326-27 A.D.

Another measure, which entailed much suffering on the population, was the transfer of the capital to Devagiri, which was re-christened Daulatabad. The empire had grown to large dimensions; towards the north it embraced the Doab, the plains of the Punjab and Lahore with the territories stretching from the Indus to the coast of Gujarat; towards the east it comprised Bengal, and in the centre it included such principalities as Malwa, Ujjain, Mahoba and Dhar. The Deccan had been subdued, and its principal powers had acknowledged the suzerainty of

Delhi.[3] Having fully weighed in his mind the drawbacks of Delhi as an imperial capital, he decided to remove to Daulatabad which was more centrally situated. It was situated at a safe distance from the route of the Mongols, who frequently threatened the neighbourhood of Delhi and made life and property insecure. It is clear that the change was not dictated by the mere caprice of a whimsical despot. Obviously, considerations of safety and better government alone urged the Sultan to take such a bold step. As regards his possessions in Hindusthan, he hoped to exercise control over them with the aid of the simple means of communication which existed between the north and south.[4]

This change might have been effected without causing much hardship, if the Sultan had remained satisfied only with the removal of the official machinery of the state. But he made an egregious blunder in ordering the people of Delhi, men, women, and children, to go *en masse* to Daulatabad with all their effects. All sorts of facilities were provided; a road was built from Delhi to Daulatabad, and food and accommodation were freely supplied to the emigrants. Those, who had no money to feed themselves during the journey,

3 Barani mentions the following provinces of the empire at the beginning of Muhammad's reign : (1) Delhi, (2) Gujarat, (3) Malwa, (4) Devagiri, (5) Telang, (6) Kampila, (7) Dho samundar (or Dwarsamudra), (8) Mábar, (9) Tirhut, (10) Lakhnauti, (11) Satgāon, (12) Sonārgāon.

Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth. Ind., p. 468.

4 Ibn Batūtā's statement that the people of Delhi dropped anonymous letters full of abuse into the king's *Diwan*, and the king took so much offence at this that he ordered the capital to be changed, is based upon hearsay, for when the transfer took place in 1326-27 A.D., he was not present in India.

were fed at the expense of the state, and the Sultan was "bounteous in his liberality and favours to the emigrants, both on their journey and on their arrival."[5] But all these concessions and favours proved of no avail. The people, who had lived in Delhi for generations, and to whom the city was endeared by numerous associations, left it with broken hearts. The sufferings, attendant upon a long journey of 700 miles, were incalculable, and a great many of them, wearied with fatigue and rendered helpless by home-sickness, perished in the way, and those who reached their journey's end found exile in a strange, unfamiliar land unbearable, and "gave up the ghost in despair." Barani writes that the Muslims, struck with despondency, laid down their heads in that heathen land, and of the multitude of emigrants only a few survived to return to their homes.[6]

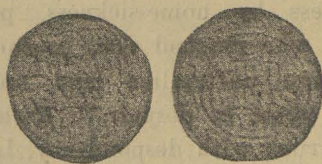
The unwarranted assumption of Ibn Batūtā that a search was instituted in Delhi under a royal mandate to find out if any of the inhabitants still lurked in their houses, and that it resulted in the discovery of two men, one lame and the other blind, who were dragged to Daulatabad, is based upon mere bazar

5 Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth. Ind., p. 474. Elliot, III, p. 239.

6 Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth. Ind., p. 474. Elliot, III, p. 239.

Zia Barani writes: "So complete was the ruin, that not a cat or a dog was left among the buildings of the city, in its palaces or in its suburbs." A statement of this kind made by an oriental writer of the middle ages is not to be taken too literally. European scholars, unaccustomed to Indian forms of speech, have made this mistake. Dr. Smith uncritically accepts Ibn Batūtā's story related above. Oxford History of India, p. 239.

gossip, invented afterwards to discredit the Sultan. It is true, the Sultan's orders were carried out in a relentless manner, but it is a calumny to assert that his object was to cause needless suffering to the population. It must be said to his credit that when he saw the failure of his scheme, he ordered the inhabitants to go back to Delhi, and on the return journey treated them with great generosity and made full amends for their losses. But Delhi was a depopulated city. From far and near,



Token Coins of Muhammad Tughluq.

the Sultan brought learned men, merchants, and landholders to take up their abode in the deserted capital, but no inducement proved of any avail to reconcile them to the changed surroundings. The old prosperity did not return, and Delhi did not recover its former grandeur, for the Moorish traveller found it in 1334 uninhabited in some places and still bearing the marks of desolation.

Daulatabad remained, as Lane-Poole remarks, a monument of misdirected energy. The scheme of transfer failed disastrously. That it would have, in the event of success, enabled the Sultan to keep a firm hold upon the different parts of the empire, may well be doubted. He failed to see that Daulatabad was situated at a long distance from the northern frontiers of the empire, which needed to be constantly watched with vigilance. He disregarded the warning, which

experience amply furnished, that Hindu revolts and Mongol inroads might at any time jeopardise his possessions in the north. If such a contingency were to arise, it would have been an extremely difficult task for the Sultan, pressed by the half-subdued races of the Deccan and the nomad hordes of Central Asia, to cope with the forces of disorder.

The token currency, 1330 A.D.

Muhammad Tughluq has rightly been called the prince of moneyers. One of the earliest acts of his reign was to reform the entire system of coinage, to determine the relative value of the precious metals, and to found coins which might facilitate exchange and form convenient circulating media, but far more daring and original was his attempt to introduce a token currency. Historians have tried to discover the motive which led the Sultan to attempt this novel experiment. The heavy drain upon the treasury has been described as the principal reason which led to the issue of the token coins. It cannot be denied that a great deficiency had been caused in the treasury by the prodigal generosity of the Sultan, the huge expenditure that had to be incurred upon the transfer of the capital, and the expeditions fitted out to quell armed rebellions. But there were other reasons which must be mentioned in giving an explanation of this measure. The taxation policy in the Doab had failed; and the famine that still stalked the most fertile part of the kingdom with the consequent decline in agriculture, must have brought about a perceptible fall in the revenue of the state. It is not to be supposed that the Sultan was faced with bankruptcy; his treasury was not denuded of specie, for he subsequently paid genuine coins for

the new ones, and managed a most difficult situation with astonishing success. He wished to increase his resources in order to carry into effect his grand plans of conquest and administrative reform, which appealed so powerfully to his ambitious nature. There was another reason: the Sultan was a man of genius who delighted in originality and loved experimentation. With the examples of the Chinese and Persian rulers before him, he decided to try the experiment without the slightest intention of defrauding or cheating his own subjects, as is borne out by the legends on his coins. Copper coins were introduced and made legal tender; but the state failed to make the issue of the new coins a monopoly of its own. The result was, as the contemporary chronicler points out in right orthodox fashion, that the house of every Hindu—of course as an orthodox Muslim he condones the offences of his co-religionists—was turned into a mint and the Hindus of the various provinces manufactured lakhs and crores of coins. Forgery was freely practised by the Hindus and the Muslims and the people paid their taxes in the new coin and purchased arms, apparels, and other articles of luxury. The village headmen, merchants, and landowners suppressed their gold and silver, and forged copper coins in abundance, and paid their dues with them. The result of this was that the state lost heavily, while private individuals made enormous profits. The state was constantly defrauded, for it was impossible to distinguish private forgeries from coins issued by the royal mint. Gold and silver became scarce, trade came to a standstill and all business was paralysed. Great confusion prevailed; merchants refused to accept the new coins which became as "value-

less as pebbles or potsherds." When the Sultan saw the failure of the scheme, he repealed his former edict and allowed the people to exchange gold and silver coins for those of copper.[7] Thousands of men brought these coins to the treasury and demanded gold and silver coins in return. The Sultan who meant no deception was defrauded by his own people, and the treasury was considerably drained by these demands. All token coins were completely withdrawn, and the silence of Ibn Batūtā who visited Delhi only three years later, proves that no disastrous results ensued, and the people soon forgot the token currency.

The failure of the scheme was inevitable in the India of the fourteenth century To the people at large copper was copper, however benevolent the intentions of the Sultan might be. The Sultan who pitched his expectations too high made no allowance for the conservative character of the people, whose acceptance of a token currency even in modern times is more in the nature of a submission to an inevitable evil than a willingness to profit by the use of a convenient circulating medium. The mint was not a state monopoly; and the Sultan failed to provide adequate safeguards to prevent forgery. Elphinstone's statement that the failure of the token currency was due to the king's insolvency and the instability of his government, is not justified by facts, for the Sultan withdrew all coins at once, and his credit remained unshaken. Mr. Gardner Brown has ascribed this currency muddle to the shortage in the world's supply of silver in the fourteenth century. Soon after his accession, Muhammad Tughluq introduc-

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[7] Barani, Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi, Biblioth. Ind., p. 486.

ed a gold *dinar* of 200 grains and an *adali* or a silver coin of 140 grains in place of the gold and silver *tankās* which had hitherto been in use, and which had weighed 175 grains each. The introduction of the gold *dinar* and the revival of the *adali* show that there was an abundance of gold and a relative scarcity of silver in the country. The prize money brought by Kāfūr from the Deccan consisted largely of jewellery and gold, and it was this which had brought about a fall in the value of gold. The scarcity of silver continued even after the death of Sultan Muhammad. Only three silver coins of Firuz have come to light, and Edward Thomas mentions only two pieces of Muhammad bin Firuz, one of Mubārak Shah, one of Muhammad bin Farid, and none of Alam Shah and his successors of the Lodi dynasty, and it is not until the middle of the 16th century that we come across a large number of silver coins, issued from the mints of Sher Shah Suri and his successors. Regarding the failure of this scheme, Edward Thomas, a numismatist of repute, has rightly observed, "There was no special machinery to mark the difference of the fabric of the royal mint and the handiwork of the moderately skilled artisan. Unlike the precautions taken to prevent the imitation of the Chinese paper notes, there was positively no check upon the authenticity of the copper token, and no limit to the power of production by the masses at large."

The liberal character of the administration.

Muhammad Tughluq adopted a policy which ran counter to the cherished prejudices of the orthodox school. He levied many taxes in addition to the four legal ones[8] prescribed by the Quran, and showed a greater

[8] The four legal taxes are *Khiraj*, *Zakat*, *Jeziya*, and *Khams*.

regard for the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus than his predecessors had ever done. Unlike his weak-minded cousin, Firuz, he was no unreasonable bigot. His culture had widened his outlook, and his converse with philosophers and rationalists had developed in him a spirit of tolerance for which Akbar is so highly praised. He employed some of them in high positions in the state,[9] and like the great Akbar after him tried to stop the horrible practice of *Sati*. The independent Rajput states were left unmolested; for the Sultan knew that it was impossible to retain permanent possession of such strongholds as Chittor and Ranthambhor—a policy which was not liked by the clerical party. He continued Alauddin's practice of appropriating four-fifths of the share of plunder to himself, leaving the rest to the soldiers. But the feelings of the *ulama* were deeply embittered, when he deprived them of the monopoly of the administration of justice. His love of justice was so great that he personally looked into the details of the judicial administration, and submissively accepted the decrees of the courts passed against himself.

He made himself the Supreme Court of Appeal, and when his judgment differed from that of the *muftis*, he overruled them and adhered to his own view. To curtail the influence of the orthodox party, he invested some of the distinguished officers of the state with judicial powers in spite of the fact that they were not *qazis*, *muftis*, or professed canonists. He was very strict in administering justice. He laid his hands

9 Ibn Batūtā speaks of a certain Hindu Ratan by name who was in the Sultan's service. The traveller praises his skill in finances. Ibn Batūtā, Paris Ed. III, pp. 105-106.



Tomb of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq.

freely upon the members of the priestly class when they were found guilty of rebellion, open sedition, or embezzlement of public funds. Neither birth nor rank, nor piety availed aught to afford protection to an offender from the punishment which his guilt merited, and that is why Ibn Batūtā, who had visited many lands and seen a great deal of men and affairs, recorded the verdict when he was in his own country, no longer afraid of the Sultan's wrath, that "of all men this king is the most humble, and of all men he most loves justice."

The Sultan organised the services of the state on an efficient basis. As there was a dearth of capable officers in the country, he employed foreigners in his service and bestowed rich rewards and gifts upon them. This policy caused discontent among the native nobility and led to rebellions in the empire. The Sultan's generosity knew no bounds. He maintained several departments, two of which are specially worthy of mention—the department of presents which regulated the giving and taking of presents and the Industrial Department which managed the preparation of costly fabrics for the use of the royal ladies and the wives of the nobles.

The Sultan, like his great predecessor Alauddin, cherished magnificent schemes of foreign conquest.

The Sultan's schemes of conquest.

Early in the reign he was induced by some Khorasani nobles who had sought refuge at his court to attempt an invasion of their country. There was nothing fantastic or absurd in the plan. The condition of Khorasan under 'Abu Said had become highly unsatisfactory. The Chaghtai chief Tarmashirin Khan and the ruler of Egypt were eager to grab

Persian territory. Muhammad who had established friendly relations with the ruler of Egypt collected a large army containing 370,000 men who were paid for one whole year from the public treasury. But the scheme did not materialise. The task was beyond the strength of the armies of Delhi at this period. It was an act of wisdom on the part of Muhammad Tughluq to abandon the scheme and to concentrate his attention upon India.

Another project which has brought much odium upon the Sultan was the so-called Chinese expedition. All modern writers on Indian history, following the lead of Firishta, have made the mistake of supposing that the expedition was aimed against China.[10] But the contemporary chronicler, Barani, says that the design of the Sultan was to conquer the mountain of Qarāchal or Qarājal, which lies between the territories of Hind and China. Ibn Batūtā states clearly that the expedition was directed against the Qarājal mountain, which is situated at a distance of ten stages from Delhi. This shows that the mountain meant was Himāchal (the Himalayas), which constitutes an impassable barrier between China and India. The expedition was obviously directed against a refractory hill chieftain who had refused to own the suzerainty of Delhi. The first attack of the

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10 Briggs, Firishta, I, p. 416.

Elphinstone, History of India, p. 396.

Firishta writes: "Having heard of the great wealth of China, Muhammad Tughluq conceived the idea of subduing that empire; but in order to accomplish his design it was found necessary first to conquer the country of Himāchal." He further says that the nobles and councillors of the king tried to convince him of the futility of the scheme, but failed to do so. Barani's testimony is, of course, more reliable, Ibn Batūtā supports Barani.

imperialists was a success, but when the rainy season set in, the troops became demoralised, and it became impossible to obtain supplies from the headquarters. The troops suffered heavily, and the entire baggage of the army was plundered by the wily mountaineers. Only ten horsemen returned to tell the story of this terrible disaster. But the object of the expedition was realised; the mountain prince made peace with the Sultan and agreed to pay tribute, for it was impossible for him to cultivate the low lands at the foot of the hills without acknowledging the authority of the ruler of Delhi, of whose kingdom they formed a part.

The disorders of the reign—Ahsan Shah's revolt.

From the year 1335 there was a perceptible decline in the fortunes of Muhammad Tughluq. It was due partly to his harsh policy in the latter years of his life, and partly to famine, which continued for several years and produced enormous suffering in all parts of Hindustan. When public revenue, the principal mainstay of the administration, decreased, rebellions broke out in all parts of the empire. The earliest rebellion of importance was that of Jalal-ud-din Ahsan Shah in Mábar, which occurred in 1335 A.D.[11] Although Delhi was in a deplorable condition owing to the famine and lawlessness prevailing in its vicinity, the Sultan marched in person to chastise the rebel; but when he reached Telingana, cholera broke out and carried

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11 The date 1338-39 gievn by Smith on page 242 in his Oxford History of India is incorrect.

Ahsan Shah rebelled in 1335 A.D. He began to issue his coins as an independent ruler in this year. Dr. Hultzsch who has examined these coins with care assigns this rebellion to 1335 A.D.

J.R.A.S., 1909, pp. 667—83.

off a large number of men belonging to the king's retinue. The expedition against Ahsan Shah was abandoned under the pressure of unforeseen troubles, and he was allowed to become independent.

Rebellion in Bengal.

Bengal had never been a loyal appanage of the empire of Delhi since the days of Muhammad, son of Bakhtiyār. Fakhr-ud-din, the armour-bearer of Qadr Khan, the governor of Lakhnauti, slew his master and usurped his territories in 737-38 A.H. (1337 A.D.). Taking advantage of the state of confusion into which the affairs of the kingdom of Delhi had fallen, he proclaimed himself independent ruler of Bengal, and struck coins in his own name. The Sultan, who was busily occupied with greater troubles in other parts of his wide dominions, could not pay attention to this upstart rebel. As there was no interference from him, Fakhr-ud-din successfully overcame the local opposition to his assumption of royal power. He soon brought the whole country under his control and governed it with ability and vigour.

Revolt of Ain-ul-mulk, 1340-41 A.D.

The rebellion in Bengal was followed by others of less importance, but they were speedily put down. The most important rebellion, however, was that of Ain-ul-mulk, the governor of Oudh and Zafrabad, which broke out in the year 1340-41. Ain-ul-mulk was a distinguished nobleman who had rendered great services to the state, and who was held in high favour at court. When the Sultan removed his court to Saragdwari in the Farrukhabad district on account of famine, Ain-ul-mulk and his brothers rendered great assistance in mitigating its severity. A singular lack

of foresight on the part of the Sultan drove the loyal governor into rebellion. Having heard of the misconduct of certain Deccan officers, the Sultan decided to appoint Ain-ul-mulk governor of that country, and ordered him to go there with his family and dependents. This peremptory order of transfer took the Malik by surprise. His ears were poisoned by those persons who had sought shelter in Oudh and Zafrabad to escape from the wrath of the Sultan. All of a sudden, Ain-ul-mulk who suspected danger revolted, and with his brothers seized the entire royal baggage which was in his charge. The Sultan was at first dumbfounded at the news of this revolt, but he at once devised measures to strengthen his forces. He paid special attention to the *morale* of the army, and himself superintended the operations. After a prolonged and stubborn fight, Ain-ul-mulk was defeated and brought as a prisoner to the royal camp. His associates were cruelly put to death, but he was pardoned in recognition of his past services and appointed superintendent of the royal gardens.

Suppression of brigandage in Sindh.

Destiny allowed no respite to this unlucky monarch and no sooner did he quell disturbances in one quarter than troubles of greater magnitude broke out in another. This evil was the greatest in Sindh. The Sultan marched thither with his forces and scattered the ruffians. Their leaders were captured and forced to embrace Islam. By the end of the year 1342 order was established in Hindustan, but disorders of greater magnitude soon afterwards broke out in the Deccan. They assumed formidable dimensions, and the Sultan found himself powerless to stamp out sedition and overcome resistance to his own authority.

The Deccan was a hot-bed of intrigue and seditious conspiracy. In the early part of the reign, the Sultan had effectively brought under his sway such distant provinces as Mábar, Warangal, and Dvārsamudra, and his empire embraced practically the whole of the Deccan. But Mábar became an independent principality in 1335, and in 1336 Hari Hara and his brother Bukka founded the kingdom of Vijayanagar as a protest against the Muslim power, of which a full account will be given later. In 1344 Kanya Nāik or Kriṣṇa Nayak, son of Pratap Rudra Deva Kākatiya, organised a confederacy of the Hindus of the South. The great Deccan revolt began, and through the efforts of Ballāla IV, Hari Hara and Kriṣṇa Nayak, followed by many lesser leaders, it finally culminated in the disappearance of Muslim power in Warangal, Dvārsamudra and the country along the Coromandel coast. The fall of the Hoysalas in 1346 enabled Hari Hara to place his power upon a firm footing, and henceforward Vijayanagar became a leading state in the South and a bulwark against the Muslim invasions from the north.

The Deccan.

Gujarat and Devagiri alone were left in the hands of Muhammad Tughluq. His many failures had soured his temper, and he had lost that quality of human sympathy without which no conciliation of hostile people is possible. He removed Qutlugh Khan, the veteran governor of Devagiri, from his office, and appointed his brother in his place—an arrangement which caused much discontent in the country. The revenue declined, and the officers of the state began to extort money for themselves from the hapless ryots. The recall of Qutlugh Khan was followed by a fresh

blunder in the massacre of the foreign Amirs by the foolish vintner's son, Aziz Khummār who had been entrusted with the fiefs of Malwa and Dhar. The crime of Aziz produced a feeling of consternation among the Amirs and they took up arms in self-defence. Disorder rapidly spread in the Deccan, and the troops became mutinous everywhere. The Sultan proceeded in person to suppress the rebellion in Gujarat, and from Broach he sent a message to Nizam-ud-din Ālim-ul-mulk, brother of Qutlugh Khan, the new governor of Daulatabad, asking him to send the foreign Amirs immediately to the royal camp. The Amirs of Raichur, Mudgal, Gulbarga, Bidar, Bijapur, Berar and other places obeyed the royal command and started for Gujarat, but on the way a sudden panic seized them, and they entertained the suspicion that the Sultan intended to take their lives. They attacked the royal escort, killed some of the men in a skirmish that followed, and returned to Daulatabad where they seized Nizam-ud-din and made him prisoner. The fort of Daulatabad fell into their hands; they seized the royal treasure, divided the Mahratta country amongst themselves, and elected one of their leaders, Malik Ismail Makh Afghan, as their king. When the Sultan received intelligence of these developments, he marched towards Daulatabad and defeated the rebels in an open engagement. Malik Makh Afghan entrenched himself in the fort of Devagiri, and Hasan Kāngū, another Afghan leader, with his followers went away in the direction of Gulburga. The Sultan laid siege to Daulatabad and sent his general Imad-ul-mulk Sartez in pursuit of the rebels. Daulatabad was recovered; but soon afterwards the Sultan had to leave the place on

account of the rebellion of Taghi in Gujarat. As soon as the Sultan's back was turned, the foreign Amirs, once again, made a vigorous effort to recover their lost power. They besieged the fort of Devagiri and baffled the attempts of the imperialists to recapture it. The imperial general Imād-ul-mulk was defeated in an action by Hasan, and the rebels occupied Daulatabad. Ismail Makh whom they had chosen as their king "voluntarily and gladly" resigned in favour of Hasan, a young and high-spirited warrior, who had taken a prominent part in these campaigns. Hasan assumed sovereignty under the title of Alauddin wad-din Abul-Muzaffar Bahman Shah on August 13, 1347 A.D. Thus was founded the famous Bahmani kingdom, of which a full account will be given in another chapter.

The death of the Sultan.

Hearing of the rebellion of Taghi, the Sultan left Devagiri for Gujarat. It was a mistake on his part to resolve to put down the traitor Taghi, before dealing effectively with the foreign Amirs. He pursued the rebel from place to place, but the latter succeeded in eluding his grasp. He subdued the Rai of Karnāl and brought the entire coast under his sway. From there he proceeded to Gondal where he fell ill and was obliged to halt for some time. Having collected a large force, he marched towards Thatta, but when he was about three or four days' march from that place he got fever and died on March 20, 1351 A.D.

Estimate of Muhammad.

Such was the end of this unlucky monarch. All his life, he battled against difficulties and never abandoned his task in despair. It is true, he failed, but his failure was largely due to circumstances over which he

had little or no control. A severe famine which lasted for more than a decade marred the glory of his reign and set his subjects against him. The verdict that declares him a cruel and bloodthirsty tyrant like Nero or Caligula does little justice to his great genius, and ignores his conspicuous plans to cope with famine and his efforts to introduce ameliorative reforms. There is ample evidence in the pages of Barani and Ibn Batūtā to show that he was not fond of shedding blood for its own sake, and that he could be kind, generous and just even towards his enemies. He possessed an intellect and a passion for practical improvement, which we rarely find in mediæval rulers. But his task was an extremely onerous one. He had to deal with the problems of an ever-growing empire with a staff of officers who never loyally co-operated with him. He had also to reckon with the orthodox *'Ulama* who clamoured for privilege and who resented his attempt to enforce justice and equality among his subjects.

All modern writers repeat the charge of madness against the Sultan, but neither in the pages of Ibn Batūtā nor in the history of Barani, there is any mention of it. The charge of bloodthirstiness is equally untenable. The Sultan was no monster of iniquity who loved crime for its own sake. He inflicted severe punishments on the wrong-doers but punishments were always severe in his day both in Europe and Asia. There is little point then in the denunciations of European writers, who are always severe in judging the actions of oriental statesmen and rulers. In pronouncing a verdict on Muhammad we must bear his difficulties in mind.

A most interesting source of information regarding the reign of Muhammad Tughluq is the account of his travels given by the Moorish traveller, Ibn Batūtā. Abu-Abdulla Muhammad, commonly known as Ibn Batūtā, was born at Tangier on the 24th February, 1304 A.D. He had an inborn liking for travel, and as soon as he grew to manhood, he made up his mind to fulfil his heart's desire. At the early age of 21, he started on his journey, and after wandering through the countries of Africa and Asia, he came to India through the passes of the Hindukush. He reached the Indus on the 12th September, 1333 A.D.; thence he proceeded to Delhi where he was hospitably received by the Queen-mother Makhdūm-i-Jahān. He was appointed Qazi of Delhi by Muhammad Tughluq and admitted to his court, where he had close opportunities of acquainting himself with the habits, character, and acts of that most extraordinary monarch. He lived in India for eight years and left the service of the Sultan in 1342 A.D. He throws much light on the customs and manners of both Hindus and Muslims in those days. and supplements Zia Barani in many respects. He was sent on an embassy to China on a diplomatic mission by Muhammad Tughluq, but he was prevented by unforeseen circumstances from fulfilling it. He returned to his native land in 1349 and recorded his experiences. He died at the age of 73 in 1377-78 A.D. Ibn Batūtā is generally a truthful recorder of events. For matters that came directly undei his notice he is reliable. In many respects he supplements Zia Barani and writes about things which are omitted in Barani altogether.

Ibn Batūtā.

The accession of Firuz Tughluq.

The death of Muhammad Tughluq near Thatta plunged the entire royal camp into confusion, and a feeling of despair seized the leaders of the army as well as the rank and file. The Mongol mercenaries who had come to assist in the expedition against Taghi began to plunder the royal camp, and the army found it difficult to retreat in safety towards the capital. The situation was further aggravated by the fact that Muhammad had left no male heir, and it was apprehended by the nobles that disastrous consequences might follow, if they did not at once proceed to choose a successor. Barani who was an eye-witness of these events writes that the late Sultan had nominated Firuz as his heir-apparent, a statement which is corroborated by another contemporary writer, Shams-i-Siraj Afif. According to the testament of the late Sultan they offered the crown to Firuz, and appealed to him to save the families of the generals and soldiers from the Mongols by accepting it. Firuz who was utterly devoid of ambition and who wished to lead the life of a religious recluse at first demurred to the proposal, and said that he contemplated a pilgrimage to Mecca. But the pressure of the nobles became irresistible, and at last he had to concede to their wishes in the interests of the state. Firuz's acceptance of the crown had a calming effect on the army, and order was quickly restored. But in Delhi the Khwājā Jahān's attempt to set up a supposititious son of Muhammad had created a serious situation. The Khwājā cannot be charged with treason, for he had done so in public interest on receiving the news of the disappearance of Firuz and Tatar Khan, the principal leaders of the

imperial army, from the field of battle. Firuz enquired of the nobles and officers of the state if the late Sultan had left a son, and received a reply in the negative. The Khwājā repented of his conduct, and with every mark of abject submission appeared before Firuz to implore forgiveness. The latter was inclined to take a lenient view of his offence on the score of his past services, but the nobles refused to condone what they described as "unpardonable treason." The Khwājā was asked to go to the fief of Samana, but on his way he was murdered. Thus did the weak and irresolute Firuz acquiesce in the murder of a trusted friend and colleague, of whose guiltlessness he was probably fully convinced.

Character of Firuz.

Firuz Tughluq mounted the throne on the 24th March, 1351 A.D., with little ambition and less fitness for that high position. The contemporary Muslim chroniclers have bestowed lavish praise upon him, for his reign marked the beginning of that religious reaction, which became a porminent feature of his administrative policy. Barani writes that since the days of Muiz-ud-din Muhammad bin Sam, there was no ruler of Delhi, so humble, merciful, truth-loving, faithful and pious. Shams-i-Siraj Afif pronounces upon him a fulsome eulogy, and extols his virtues in terms of hyperbolical praise. He was a bigot who observed the Holy Law with great strictness, and on the occasion of religious festivals behaved like a pious Muslim. He encouraged his 'infidel' subjects to embrace Islam and exempted the converts from the payment of the *jeziya*. The Brahmanas were taxed and their protests were contemptuously disregarded. All decorations in the

royal palace were forbidden. The Sultan himself used earthen vessels instead of plates of gold and silver for dining purposes. But his vaunted devotion to the Quran did not prevent him from seeking the gratification of his lower appetites. On one occasion, in the midst of a campaign, when Tatar Khan paid him a visit, he saw him lying half naked with wine cups concealed in his bed. The Khan reproached him for this depravity, and the Sultan promised to observe abstinence as long as Tatar Khan was with the army. But the weakness of will soon asserted itself, and the Khan was transferred to the neighbourhood of Hisar Firuza.

Though rigidly orthodox, Firuz was generous and humane. He behaved towards his co-religionists with great generosity and liberally helped the poor and the unemployed. His kindness is reflected in his reform of the legal system. He abolished torture, simplified the legal procedure and discouraged espionage. He extended his patronage to learned men and established schools and colleges for theological instruction. Several measures were devised by him to promote the welfare of his subjects of all classes, the chief of which were the facilities of irrigation and a hospital at Delhi where medical aid was given free of cost.

Firuz is well-known in history for his administrative reform, but he had nothing of the ability, intrepidity, and vigour of Alauddin Khilji or Muhammad Tughluq. He was a weak-minded man who listened too much to the advice of *muftis* and *maulvis*. The results of this policy were seen after a generation in the complete disintegration of the Sultanate of Delhi.

The first expedition to Bengal 1353-54 A.D.

During the confusion that followed the death of Muhammad Tughluq, Bengal completely separated itself from Delhi, and Hājī Ilyās proclaimed himself an independent ruler under the title of Shams-ud-din. The Sultan marched towards Bengal at the head of a large army, and on reaching there issued a proclamation to his Bengali subjects, in which he explained the wrongs of Hājī Ilyas and his own desire to do justice to the people and to govern the country well.

When Hājī Ilyās heard of his approach, he entrenched himself in the fort of Iqdalā. To induce him to leave the fortress, Firuz had recourse to a clever strategical move; he retraced his steps a few miles backwards in the hope that the enemy would come out of the fort in order to harass the retreating army. The expected happened, and Shams-ud-din followed the royal army at the head of a considerable force consisting of ten thousand horse and 200,000 foot, all eager to fight against the Delhvis. The Sultan arranged his troops in battle array according to the time-honoured practice of mediæval warfare in three divisions—the right, left, and centre and himself took an active part in organising the campaign. A terrible battle ensued in which the protagonists on either side fought with great valour and determination. When Shams-ud-din saw the day going against him, he fled from the field of battle and took shelter again in the fort of Iqdalā. The royalists followed up their success and invested the fort in full vigour. But the shrieks and wails of women who pathetically demonstrated their grief, moved the compassionate heart of the Sultan, and he forthwith decided

to abandon the fruits of a hard-earned victory. This is how the official historian of the reign describes Firuz's incapacity to deal with a difficult situation: 'To storm the fort, put more Musalmans to the sword, and expose honourable women to ignominy, would be a crime for which he could not answer on the day of judgment, and which would leave no difference between him and the Mughals.' Tatar Khan, the imperial commandant, urged the annexation of the province, but with his characteristic weakness Firuz rejected his advice on the plea that Bengal was a land of swamps, and that it was not worth while to retain possession of it.

The second expedition, 1359-60 A.D.

On his return from Bengal the Sultan devoted himself with great energy and vigour to the organisation of his administration. But a second expedition to Bengal became necessary, when Zafar Khan, the son-in-law of Fakhr-ud-din, the first independent ruler of Bengal, complained of the high-handedness of Shams-ud-din and begged the Sultan to intercede on his behalf. Zafar Khan was well received at Court, and his heart was elated with joy when the Sultan ordered the Khan-i-Jahan to make preparations for a second expedition to Bengal. Popular enthusiasm rose to such a high pitch that numerous volunteers enrolled themselves in the army which consisted of 70,000 horse, innumerable foot, 470 elephants and a large flotilla of boats. Shams-ud-din had been dead for some time, and his son Sikandar had succeeded him. Following the example of his father, he shut himself in the fort of Iqdalā. The fortress was besieged, and the royalists made breaches in its walls, which were soon repaired by the Bengalis, who

displayed great courage and vigour. But the patience of both sides was soon exhausted by this interminable siege, and negotiations for peace began. Sikandar's envoy conducted the negotiations with great patience, tact and firmness. He agreed to the restoration of Sonārgāon to Zafar Khan and sent forty elephants and valuable presents to the Sultan to cement their friendship. But Zafar Khan, who was the chief cause of all this trouble, gave up the idea of retiring to his country and preferred to remain at Delhi. Once again Firuz's weakness prevented him from asserting his sovereignty over a province which was well-nigh within his grasp.

The subjugation of the Rai of Jajnagar.

On his return from Bengal, the Sultan halted at Jaunpur, from where he marched against Jajnagar (modern Orissa), which was in a flourishing condition. The Rai of Jajnagar fled at the approach of the royal army and took shelter in an island, whither he was pursued by the Sultan's forces. The temple of Jagannath at Puri was desecrated and the idols were thrown into the sea. At last, dismayed by the heavy odds arrayed against him, he sent his emissaries to negotiate the terms of peace. To their utter surprise, the Sultan informed them that he was entirely ignorant of the cause of their master's flight. The Rai explained his conduct and agreed to furnish a fixed number of elephants every year as tribute. The Sultan accepted these terms, and having obtained the submission of several other Hindu chieftains and Zamindars on his way, he returned to the capital.

The fortress of Nagarkot had been conquered by Muhammad Tughluq in 1337, but during the latter part

Conquest of Nagarkot, 1360-61 A.D.

of his reign its Rai had established himself as an independent ruler. The temple of Jwalamukhi in Nagarkot was an old and venerated shrine which was visited by thousands of Hindu pilgrims who made rich offerings to the idol. Its sanctity was an additional reason which led the bigoted Firuz to undertake this expedition; and the contemporary chronicler writes that when the Sultan paid a visit to the temple, he addressed the assembled Rais, Ranas, and Zamindars in these words: "Of what avail is the worship of this stone? What desire of yours will be fulfilled by praying to it? It is declared in our Holy Law that those who act contrary to it will go to hell." The fort of Nagarkot was besieged, and *manjnīqs* and *arradas* were placed on all sides. After a protracted siege of six months, which well-nigh exhausted the patience of the combatants on both sides, Firuz offered pardon to the Rai, who "came down from his fort, apologised, and threw himself at the feet of the Sultan, who placed his hand on his back, bestowed upon him rich robes of honour and sent him back to his fort."

The conquest of Thatta, 1371-72 A.D.

The Thatta expedition is one of the most interesting episodes in the reign of Firuz Tughluq. It originated in a desire to avenge the wrongs done by the people of Thatta to the late Sultan. Preparations for the campaign were made, and volunteers were enrolled in the army which consisted of 90,000 cavalry, numerous infantry and 480 elephants. A large flotilla of five thousand boats was also constructed and placed under experienced admirals. Jam Babiniya, the chieftain of Sind, arranged in battle

array his forces which numbered 20,000 horse and 400,000 foot, and prepared for action. Meanwhile in the Sultan's camp provisions became scarce owing to famine and pestilence, which decimated the troops and swept away nearly one-fourth of the cavalry.

Reduced to sore straits, the Sultan retreated towards Gujarat and lost his way in the Ran of Kutch. Having reached Gujarat, he organised his army and spent about two crores in obtaining the sinews of war. The royal army was further strengthened by the reinforcements sent by the Khan-i-Jahan from Delhi. The Sindhians were frightened and expressed their willingness to surrender. The Jam offered submission; he was taken to Delhi where a liberal pension was granted to him and his brother was reinstated in the Jamship.

Civil administration.

Firuz revived the Jagīr system which had been discontinued by Alauddin. The whole empire was divided into fiefs and the fiefs into districts held by his officers. In addition to these grants of land, the officers of the state were given allowances which enabled them to accumulate large fortunes. The interests of the agriculturists were well protected. The Sultan constructed four canals which irrigated large areas of land and levied a small irrigation cess which amounted to ten per cent of the produce of the fields. The system of taxation was reorganised and made to conform to the law of Islam. All vexatious taxes were abolished and Firuz in his *Fatuhat-i-Firuzshahi* takes credit for abolishing twenty-three such taxes. He levied only four taxes allowed by the Holy Law, namely, the *Khirāj*, *Zakat*, *Jeziya* and *Khams*. The spoils of war and conquest won by the arms of the faithful were to

be shared by the army and the state in the proportion laid down in the sacred law. The new policy of taxation had a beneficial effect on the development of trade and agriculture. Prices were low and no scarcity of necessaries was ever felt.

In administering law and justice Firuz acted like an orthodox Muslim. He followed the Quran with the strictest fidelity. The *mufti* expounded the law and the Qazi delivered the judgment. The legal system was reformed. Torture was abolished and leniency was shown in awarding punishments to wrong-doers.

The Sultan was kindly disposed towards the poor and the unemployed. The Kotwals made lists of those who were in want and forwarded them to the *Diwan* where suitable occupations were provided for them.

Himself acquainted with the science of medicine, the Sultan established a hospital (*Dār-ul-Shafā*) at Delhi where medicines were distributed to the sick free of cost. The patients were supplied with food at the expense of the state, and competent physicians were appointed to look after them.

The military organisation of the empire rested on a feudal basis. Grants of land were made to the soldiers of the army for their maintenance while the irregulars (*ghairwajh*) were paid from the royal treasury, and those who received neither salary nor grants of land were given assignments upon the revenue. The royal army consisted of 80 or 90 thousand cavalry in addition to the retainers of the feudal barons and grandees of the state, who numbered a little less than two hundred thousand. Horsemen were required to bring the right kind of

The Army.

animals to the registration office, and the corrupt practices that had formerly attended this business were put an end to by the vigilant Malik Razi, the *Nāib-Arīz-i-mamālik* (deputy muster-master). The soldiers were treated kindly and were provided with all sorts of comforts. But the Sultan's misplaced generosity seriously impaired the efficiency of the army by allowing aged and infirm persons, no longer fit for active service, to remain in it. A new regulation laid down that when a soldier became unfit on account of old age, his son, or son-in-law, or slave should succeed him, and in this way "the veterans were to remain at home in ease and the young were to ride forth in their strength."

The slave system.

One of the principal features of the reign of Firuz was the unusual growth of the slave system. From the various parts of the empire slaves were sent by viceroys and were granted allowances by the state. Owing to the Sultan's favour the number of slaves rapidly multiplied, so that in a few years in the metropolis and the provinces of the empire their total number reached the high figure of 180,000. For the proper management of this army of slaves, a separate department with a regular staff of officers was established, which must have caused a heavy drain upon the treasury.

Works of public utility.

Firuz was a great builder. He founded the towns of Firuzabad, Fatahabad, Jaunpur and several others; built mosques, palaces, monasteries and inns for the convenience of travellers, and repaired numerous buildings which had suffered from the ravages of time.

Numerous artisans were employed by the state, and a qualified superintendent was appointed to supervise the work of each class of artisans. The plan of every new building was examined in the finance office (*Diwan-i-Wizārat*) and then money was sanctioned for its construction.

The Sultan was a great gardener. He rebuilt the old gardens of Alauddin and laid out 1,200 new ones in the vicinity of Delhi. Numerous gardens and orchards were laid out, which yielded to the state a large revenue. Much waste land was reclaimed, and though the extent of the empire was reduced, its revenue increased by several millions.

Firuz took interest in the preservation of ancient monuments, and caused two monoliths of Aśoka to be removed to his new city. Learned Brahmanas were called to decipher the inscriptions on the pillars, but they failed to make out the script which was totally different from the language with which they were familiar. Some of them tried to please the Sultan by saying that it was recorded in the inscriptions that no one would be able to remove the monoliths until the advent of Firuz.

Promotion of learning.

Though not a finished scholar like his cousin Muhammad Tughluq, the Sultan was interested in the promotion of learning. He extended his patronage to Shaikhs and learned men and accorded to them a most hearty reception in his Palace of Grapes. He granted pensions and gratuities to them and made it a part of his state policy to encourage learned men in all parts of the empire. He was fond of history, and the works of Zia Barani and Shams-i-Siraj Afif, besides other

works on law and theology, were written during his reign. Numerous colleges and monasteries were established, where men devoted themselves to study and meditation, and to each college was attached a mosque for worship.

The *Masiri-i-Rahimi* of Abdul Baqi states that he built fifty *Madrasas*. Nizamuddin and Firishta estimate the number to be thirty. Firuz speaks of such institutions in his *Fatūhat*. The Firuzshahi *Madrasa* at Firuzabad was liberally endowed and surpassed in scholastic attainments the other *Madrasas* of the time. The Sultan caused several works to be translated from Sanskrit into Persian. One of these was the *Dalāyal-i-Firuzshahi* which was seized during the conquest of Nagarkot.

No account of Firuz's reign would be complete without a mention of his able and energetic minister

Khan-i-Jahan Maqbūl.

Khan-i-Jahan Maqbūl. He was originally a Hindu of Telingana but had latterly embraced Islam. He had acquired much valuable experience of public affairs under Sultan Muhammad Tughluq, who had entrusted to him the fief of Multan. When Firuz ascended the throne, Maqbūl was elevated to the position of the first minister of the realm after the fall of Ahmad bin Ayaz. When he went on distant expeditions he left the minister in charge of the capital, and the latter managed the affairs of the state with such ability and vigour that the long absence of the Sultan had no effect upon the administration. Though a great statesman, devoted to the interests of the state, the minister was like most men of rank in his age addicted to the pleasures of the *haram*. It is said, he had two thousand women of

different nationalities in his seraglio and a large number of children, who were all liberally provided for by the state. The Khan-i-Jahan lived up to a ripe old age. When he died in 1370 A.D., his son Jūnā Shah, who was born at Multan during the reign of Muhammad Tughluq, was confirmed in his office and the title which his father had so long enjoyed was bestowed upon him.

The last days of Firuz.

The last days of Firuz were clouded by sorrow and anxiety, and the even tenor of his life was disturbed by the dissensions of parties and factions. The infirmities of age had compelled him to delegate his authority to the minister Khan-i-Jahan, but the latter's overweening pride and insolence filled the old nobility with disgust. In order to put Prince Muhammad out of his way, the minister informed the Sultan that the Prince had entered into a confederacy with certain disaffected nobles and intended to take his life. So skilfully did the wily minister play upon the fears of the weak-minded Firuz that he readily granted him permission to arrest the conspirators. But the Prince proved too clever for him, and by a dexterous move foiled the intrigues of his enemy. Having secured permission for his ladies to visit the royal seraglio, he put on his armour and got into one of the palanquins. When he reached the palace, he threw himself at the feet of his father and begged forgiveness. He was pardoned and the Sultan declared him his heir-apparent. Secure in his position, the Prince spent his time in pleasure and appointed his own unworthy favourites to positions of honour. Opposition to the Prince grew apace, and civil war ensued. The nobles sought the protection of the old Sultan, and his appearance had a magical effect on the

hostile troops. The Prince fled towards the Sirmur hills, and order was quickly restored. Firuz once more assumed sovereignty, but advancing age rendered him unfit for the proper discharge of kingly duties. The last public act of his life was the conferment of the royal insignia upon his grandson, Tughluq Shah bin Fatah Khan, to whom he delegated his authority. Not long afterwards the old Sultan died at the age of eighty in the month of Ramzan, 790 A.H. (October 1388). His death was followed by the scramble of rival princes and parties for power which will be described in the next chapter.

The causes of disintegration.

After the death of Firuz the kingdom of Delhi rapidly declined in importance. The disorders of Muhammad's reign had sapped its vigour, and Firuz had done nothing to recover its lost prestige. His policy of weakness and vacillation led the provincial viceroys to declare their independence and to defy the central power. The awe in which the ruling power was held had departed, and Firuz was loved and not feared by his subjects. The Muslims had lost their old vigour and intrepidity, and were incapable of bold and fearless action in the midst of a campaign. The Jagīr system led to great abuses, and often placed within the reach of disloyal and ambitious men the means of making a bid for independence. The number of Firuz's slaves increased out of all proportion, and it became a problem to maintain 180,000 men who depended upon the state for everything. The incompetence of the successors of Firuz hastened the fall of the empire, and when the spirit of revolt reared its head in the land, the administration fell into utter chaos and none was found

strong enough to arrest the forces of disintegration. A military monarchy like that of the Turks could not exist in a foreign land, when its foundations had been undermined by a policy of weakness and inaction.

Successors of Firuz.

The successor of Firuz was his grandson Tughluq Shah, son of Prince Fatah Khan, who ascended the throne under the title of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq II. His policy estranged from him his nobles and amirs who entered into a conspiracy and had him murdered on February 19, 1389. Abu Bakr succeeded him and tried to restore order in the empire, but he had soon to make room for Prince Muhammad, the younger son of Firuz. The latter made a bold attempt to deal with the disorders of the time. An expedition was planned against the rebellious chief of Mewat, but the Sultan who was already feeble in health died on January 15, 1394. His son Humayun succeeded him, but he too died after a few days.

The throne now fell to the lot of Prince Mahmūd, the youngest son of Muhammad, who assumed the sceptre under the title of Nāsiruddin Mahmud Tughluq. No sooner was the prince seated on the throne than he had to bear the brunt of the opposition of rival parties at the capital. He desperately hovered between opposing factions, trying in vain to put down strife and strengthen his authority, when the news came that Amir Timur was advancing upon Hindustan with his countless hosts.

Timur's invasion, 1398 A.D.

Timur was born in 1335 A.D. at Kech in Transoxiana, fifty miles south of Samarqand. He was the son of Amir Turghay, chief of the Gurkan branch of the Barlās, a

noble Turkish tribe, and a nephew of Haji Barlās. At the age of thirty-three he became the head of the Turks and constantly waged war against Persia and the adjoining lands. Having made himself master of the countries of central Asia, he resolved on



Timur.

the invasion of Hindustan which was at the time in a state of anarchy. His motive in doing so was 'to purify the land itself from the filth of infidelity and polytheism.'

The advance guard of Timur's army under his grandson Pir Muhammad soon reached India, crossed the Indus, captured Uchha, and then advanced upon Multan, which also capitulated after a protracted siege of six months. Having collected a large army from all

parts of his wide dominions, Timur marched across the Hindukush and crossed the river Indus on September 24, 1398. When he reached the neighbourhood of Dipalpur, the people who had murdered Musafir Qābuli whom Pir Muhammad had appointed governor of their city, fled out of fear and took refuge in the fort of Bhatnir, which was one of the most renowned fortresses in Hindustan. The generals of Timur attacked the fort on the right and the left and captured it. The Rai submitted but the Amir inflicted heavy punishments upon the inhabitants of Bhatnir. Men and women were slain, their goods were forcibly seized, and the buildings and the fort were razed to the ground.

From Bhatnir Timur marched to Sirsuti which was easily conquered, and when he reached Kaithal, which is at a distance of 34 miles from Samana, he began to make preparations for an attack upon Delhi. As the army progressed in its journey, the inhabitants of the towns through which it passed fled in panic, leaving their houses and goods at the disposal of the invaders. Town after town surrendered, and in a short time Timur reached the Jahanuma, a fine palace built by Firuz Shah at a distance of six miles from Delhi. The neighbouring country was ravaged, and the soldiers were permitted to obtain food and fodder for themselves and their cattle by means of plunder. When Timur reached near Delhi, he ordered that the 100,000 Hindus who were in his camp should be put to death, for he thought that on the great day of battle they might 'break their bonds' and go over to the enemy. Even such a pious man as Maulana Nāsir-ud-din Omar who had never killed a sparrow in his life slew fifteen infidels who happened to be his prisoners.

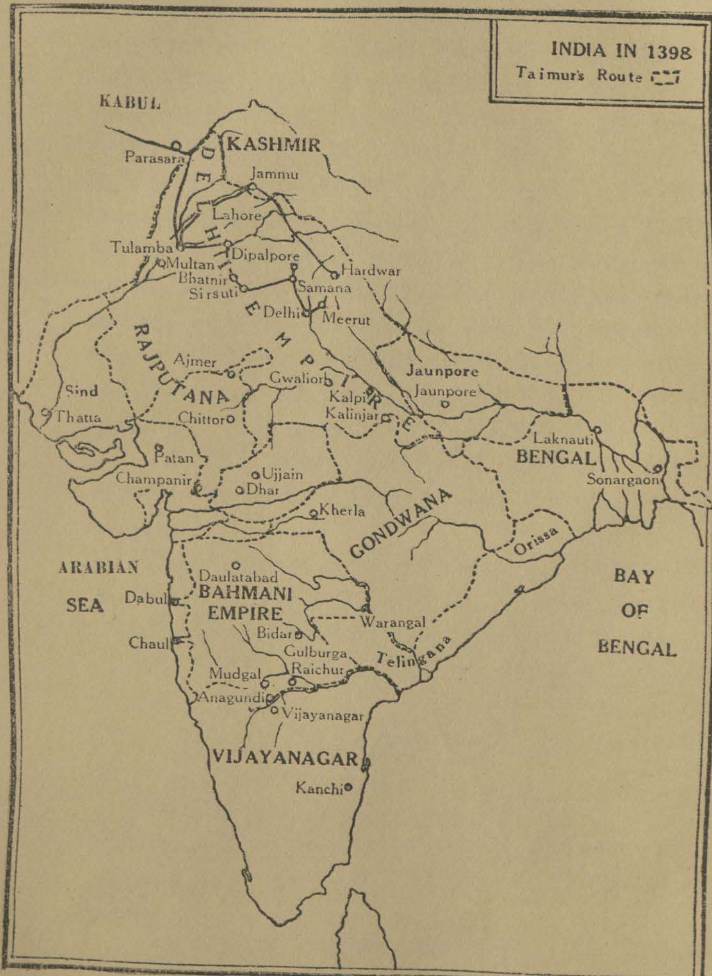
Timur organised his forces in battle array and made ready for action. Sultan Mahmud and Mallu Iqbal collected an army which contained 10,000 well-trained horse, 40,000 foot, and 125 elephants. The two armies confronted each other outside Delhi. In the battle that followed the Delhi army fought with desperate courage, but it was defeated. Mahmud and Mallu Iqbal fled from the field of battle, and Timur hoisted his flag on the ramparts of Delhi. The city was thoroughly sacked, and the inhabitants were massacred. According to the *Zafarnama* men and women were made slaves and vast booty fell into the hands of the enemy. Several thousand craftsmen and mechanics were brought out of the city and were divided among the Princes, Amirs and Afghans who had assisted in the conquest.

Timur halted at Delhi for a fortnight which he spent in pleasure and enjoyment. After that he moved towards Meerut and then proceeded to Hardwar where a fierce fight raged between the Hindus and Muslims. This was followed by a successful raid in the Siwalik hills. The Rai was defeated and vast booty fell into the hands of the victors.

Having completed the conquest of the Siwalik country, Timur marched towards Jammu. The Raja was defeated and taken prisoner and forced to embrace Islam.

The task of conquest was now over. Timur felt that it was time to go. Having entrusted the fiefs of Lahore, Multan and Dipalpur to Khizr Khan he left for Samarqand

Timur's invasion caused widespread anarchy in Hindustan. The government at Delhi was completely


INDIA IN 1398
Taimur's Route
KABUL
KASHMIR
Parasara
Jammu
DELHI EMPIRE
Lahore
Tulamba
Multan
Dipalpore
Hardwar
Bhatnir
Samana
Sirsuti
Delhi
Meerut
RAJPUTANA
Ajmer
Gwalior
Kalpi
Kalinjar
Jaunpore
Jaunpore
Sind
Thatta
Chittor
Laknauti
BENGAL
Patan
Champanir
Ujjain
Dhar
Sonargaon
Kherla
GONDWANA
Orissa
ARABIAN SEA
Daulatabad
BAHMANI EMPIRE
BAY OF BENGAL
Dabul
Warangal
Chaul
Bidar
Gulburga
Telingana
Mudgal
Raichur
Anagundi
Vijayanagar
VIJAYANAGAR
Kanchi

paralysed and in the vicinity of the capital as well as in the provinces of the empire, the greatest confusion prevailed. To the sufferings consequent upon a war, conducted by heartless ruffians, fired by a fanatical thirst for bloodshed and plunder, were added the horrors of famine and pestilence, which destroyed men and decimated cattle, and caused a suspension of the agricultural industry. The dislocation of the entire social system, coupled with the abeyance of political authority capable of enforcing peace and order, favoured the plans of the military adventurers, who harried the land and harassed the people for their own aggrandisement. The small military cliques working for their own selfish ends became the chief curse of the time. In March, 1399, Sultan Nusrat Shah who had fled into the Doab recovered possession of Delhi, but it soon passed into the hands of Iqbal Khan, whose sway extended over a few districts in the Doab and the fiefs in the neighbourhood of the capital.[12] Iqbal gradually asserted his

Effects of Timur's invasion.

12 The rest of the empire was parcelled out into fiefs which were independent.

Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi, Elliot, IV, p. 37.

The following were the principal fiefs of the empire :—

Delhi and the Doab ...	Iqbal Khan.
Gujarat with all its districts and dependencies ...	Zafar Khan Wajīh-ul-Mulk.
Multan, Dipalpur and parts of Sindh ...	Khizr Khan.
Mahoba and Kalpi ...	Mahmud Khan.
Kanauj, Oudh, Kara, Dalmau, Sandila, Bahraich, Bihar and Jaunpur ...	Khwaja Jahan.
Dhar	Dilawar Khan.
Saman	Ghalib Khan.
Biyana	Shams Khan.

authority, and in 1401 he was joined by Sultan Mahmūd, whom he formally received in the capital. But as real power was in the hands of Iqbal, Sultan Mahmūd chafed against the restraint imposed upon him, and sought in vain the help of Ibrahim Shah of Jaunpur. Thus foiled in his efforts to effect a coalition against Iqbal, the Sultan settled at Kanauj where the disbanded troops and retainers rallied round his banner. Iqbal marched towards Gwalior to chastise the local ruler Bhima Deva, but he was obliged to raise the siege and return to Delhi. His expedition against the Hindu chiefs of Etawah was more successful; but when he marched towards Multan, Khizr Khan, the governor, opposed him, and in a battle that ensued Iqbal was slain in 1405. The death of Iqbal removed from the path of Mahmūd a formidable opponent, and on being invited by Daulat Khan and other nobles, he proceeded to Delhi, but the imbecility of his character soon made him unpopular with the army, and prevented him from making a proper use of his restored rights. The author of the *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* who has carefully chronicled the events of this troubled period, writes: "The whole business was fallen into the greatest disorder. The Sultan gave no heed to the duties of his station, and had no care for the permanency of the throne; his whole time was devoted to pleasure and debauchery."

Sultan Mahmūd Tughluq died in 1412 and with him, as Firishta writes, fell the kingdom of Delhi from the race of the Turks, who had mightily swayed the sceptre for more than two centuries. After his death the Amirs and Maliks chose Daulat Khan as their leader and gave him their adhesion. Daulat Khan

received no honours of royalty; he occupied only the position of the head of a military oligarchy which was trying to save itself from a highly difficult situation. Shortly after his assumption of this quasi-royal office, Daulat Khan led an expedition to Katehar and received the submission of the Hindu chiefs. At this time came the disquieting news that Ibrahim Shah of Jaunpur was besieging Qadr Khan in his fortress at Kalpi, but Daulat Khan had no forces at his command to march to his relief. Meanwhile, Khizr Khan, the governor of Multan and Timur's deputy in Hindustan, who had been watching the disordered state of things, advanced upon Delhi, and after a siege of four months compelled Daulat Khan to surrender on May 23, 1414. Fortune befriended Khizr Khan; he easily acquired possession of Delhi and laid the foundations of a new dynasty.

CHAPTER XXIV

BREAK-UP OF THE EMPIRE

(i) The Rise of Provincial Dynasties

Malwa.

In the tenth century the kingdom of Malwa fell into the hands of the Parmar Rajputs, and under their rule it attained to great prominence. During the reign of Raja Bhoja of Dhāra Malwa became very famous. In 1235 Iltutmish raided Ujjain and demolished the famous temple of Mahākāli. Alauddin conquered it in 1310, and from that time it continued to be held by Muslim governors until the break-up of the kingdom of Delhi after the death of Firuz Tughluq. In 1401 Dilāwar Khan, a descendant of Muhammad Ghori and one of the fief-holders of Firuz Tughluq, established his independence during the period of confusion that followed the invasion of Timur, and made Dhar the capital of his kingdom.[1] Dilāwar was succeeded by his son, Alap Khan, under the title of Hushang Shah (1405—1434 A.D.), who transferred his capital to Mandu, which he adorned with many beautiful buildings. The situation of Malwa and the fertility of its lands involved it in wars with the neighbouring kingdoms of Delhi, Jaunpur and Gujarat, which greatly taxed her resources. Hushang was defeated in a war with Gujarat and was taken prisoner, but he was soon liberated and restored to his kingdom.

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[1] Firishta has given a connected account of the kings of Malwa. See Briggs, IV. pp. 167—279.

He was succeeded by his son Ghazni Khan, a worthless debauchee, who was murdered by his minister, Mahmud Khan,[2] a Khilji Turk, who usurped the throne and assumed the honours of royalty. Under Mahmud Khilji (1436—69 A.D.) Malwa rose to be a powerful and prosperous kingdom, and its ruler established his fame as a great general and warrior all over Hindustan by his unending wars against the rulers of Rajputana, Gujarat, and the Sultan of the Bahmani dynasty. Mahmud was a brave soldier; his fondness for war was so great that his whole life was spent in the military camp. As an administrator he was just and generous, and Firishta writes of him: "Sultan Mahmud was polite, brave, just and learned; and during his reign, his subjects, Muhammadans as well as Hindus, were happy, (and) maintained a friendly intercourse, with each other. Scarcely a year passed that he did not take the field, so that his tent became his home, and the field of battle, his resting place. His leisure hours were devoted to hearing the histories and memoirs of the courts of different kings of the earth read."

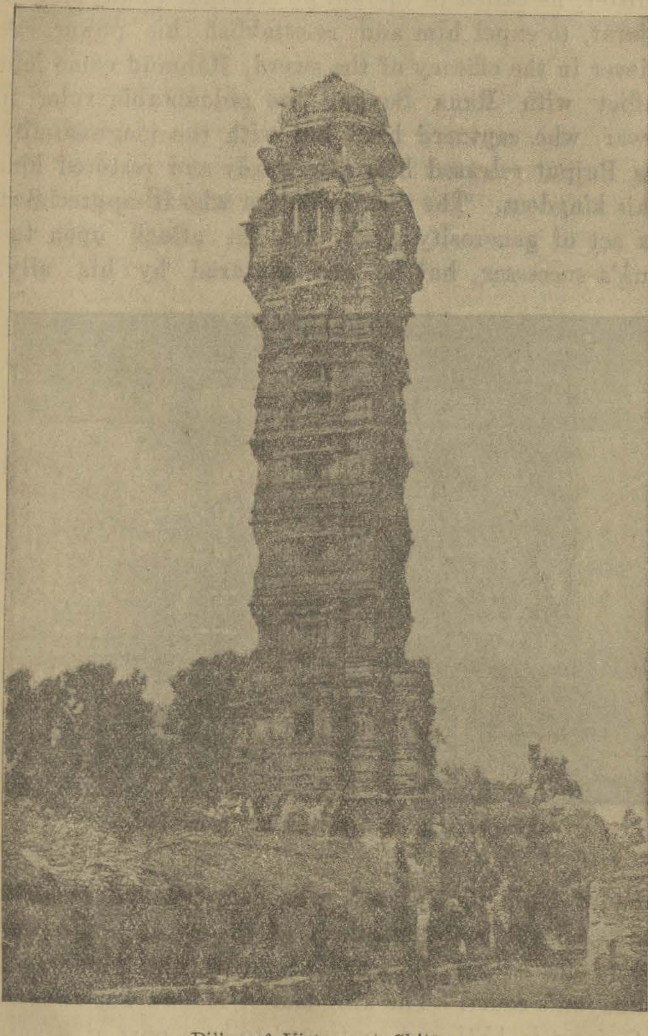
Mahmud Khilji greatly enlarged his dominion, which extended in the south to the Satpura range, in the west to the frontier of Gujarat, on the east to Bundelkhand, and on the north to Mewar and Herauti. In 1440 the ambitious Sultan proceeded against Delhi,

2 Mahmud Khilji was the son of Malik Mughis Khilji. Both father and son acted as ministers to Hushang. Hushang's son, Ghazni Khan, who assumed the title of Muhammad Ghori, was married to the sister of Mahmud Khilji. Being a debauchee and a drunkard, he left the business of the state entirely in the hands of Mahmud Khilji, whose ambition led him to imprison his royal patron. (Briggs, IV, pp. 186, 191, 193. Elliot, IV, pp. 552—54.)

which was in a state of decline, but Bahlol Lodi successfully resisted his advance. His war with Rana Kumbha of Chittor about the same time was indecisive. Both sides claimed the victory. The Rana commemorated his triumph by building the "Tower of Victory" at Chittor, while the Khilji war-lord erected a seven-storied tower at Mandu as a monument of his success.

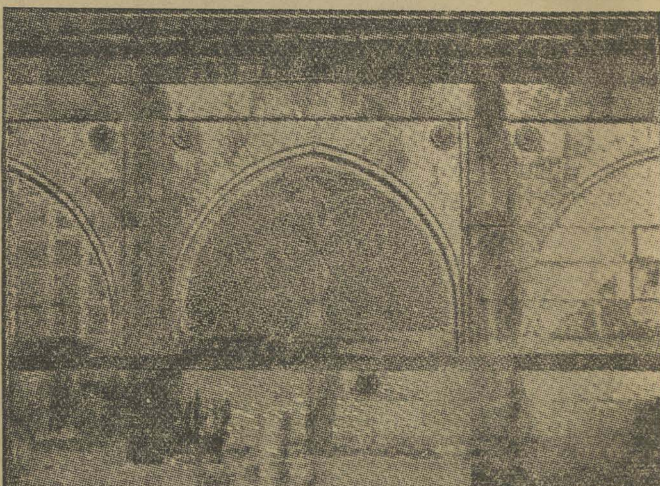
Mahmud was succeeded by his son Ghiyās-ud-din in 1469 A.D., who was poisoned to death by his son Nāsir-ud-din, who ascended the throne in 1500 A.D. Nāsir-ud-din's murder of his father does not seem to have shocked Muslim sentiment at the time it was committed, but nearly a century later it received a most scathing condemnation from Jahangir, who ordered the ashes of the parricide to be cast into the fire.

Nāsir-ud-din turned out a miserable sensualist and a brutal tyrant, and Jahangir's informant told him, when he visited the place in 1617, that there were 15,000 women in his *haram*, accomplished in all arts and crafts, and that whenever he heard of a beautiful virgin, he would not desist until he obtained possession of her. In a fit of drunkenness, when he fell into the Kaliyadaha lake, none of his attendants had the courage to pull him out, for he had mercilessly punished them for similar service on a previous occasion, and he was left to be drowned. He was succeeded in 1510 by Mahmud II, who called in the Rajputs to curb the turbulence of the Muslim oligarchy which had become powerful in the state. He appointed a Rajput nobleman, Medini Rao, to the office of minister with the result that Rajput influence became predominant at his court. Distrustful of the motives of his powerful



Pillar of Victory at Chittor.

minister, he called in the aid of Muzaffar Shah, king of Gujarat, to expel him and re-establish his power. A believer in the efficacy of the sword, Mahmud came into conflict with Rana Sanga, the redoubtable ruler of Mewar, who captured him, but with the magnanimity of a Rajput released him afterwards and restored him to his kingdom. The unwise Sultan who ill-appreciated this act of generosity again led an attack upon the Rana's successor, but he was captured by his ally,



Fine carving in a Masjid in Ahmadabad.

Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, who defeated and executed him. All the male members of the royal house were put to death, the sole survivor being one who was at Humayun's court. The kingdom of Malwa was annexed to Gujarat in 1531 and continued to be a part of it until it was conquered by Humayun. Humayun expelled Bahadur Shah from Malwa in 1535 and defeated him at

Mandasor and Mandu. When the sovereignty of Delhi passed into the hands of Sher Shah, he entrusted the province to one of his coadjutors, Shujāt Khan, who was succeeded on his death by his son, Malik Bayazid, known as Baz Bahadur, so famous in folk-lore and legend by reason of his passionate attachment to the beautiful and accomplished princess, Rūpmati of Sarangpur. In 1562 the conquest of Malwa was effected with terrible cruelty by Akbar's generals, Adam Khan and Pir Muhammad, and it was annexed to the Mughal empire. Baz Bahadur after a futile struggle acknowledged Akbar as his suzerain and received the command of 2,000 horse as a mark of royal favour.

Gujarat.

The province of Gujarat was one of the most fertile and wealthy provinces of India and had always attracted the attention of foreign invaders. Mahmud of Ghazni was the first Muslim invader, whose famous raid upon the temple of Somnath was the prelude to further Muslim invasions. But the permanent conquest of Gujarat was not attempted until the reign of Alauddin Khilji, who annexed it to the Sultanate of Delhi in 1297. The province was henceforward held by Muslim governors who were subordinate to the rulers of Delhi, but whose loyalty fluctuated according to the strength or weakness of the central government. After the invasion of Timur, when the affairs of the Delhi kingdom fell into confusion, Zafar Khan, the governor, assumed the position of an independent prince in 1401 and formally withdrew his allegiance. His son Tatar Khan conspired with some of the discontented nobles to get rid of his father, who was an obstacle to his assumption of royal dignity. He threw him into confinement and assumed

royal honours under the title of Nāsir-ud-din Muhammad Shah in 1403. But his glory was short-lived, for he was soon afterwards poisoned by Shams Khan, one of his father's confidants. Zafar Khan was brought from Asāwal, and with the consent of the nobles and officers of the army he assumed the honours of royalty under the title of Muzaffar Shah. He subdued Dhar and undertook several other expeditions to consolidate his power. But four years later he was poisoned by his grandson Ahmad Shah who was anxious to usurp the throne for himself.

Ahmad Shah 1411—1441 A.D.

He was the true founder of the independence of Gujarat. A brave and warlike prince, he spent his whole life in waging wars and conquering territories to enlarge the boundaries of his small kingdom. In the first year of his reign, he built the city of Ahmadabad on the left bank of the Sabarmati river near the old town of Asāwal, and adorned it with beautiful buildings, and invited artisans and merchants to settle there. He was an orthodox Muslim and waged wars against the Hindus, destroyed their temples, and forced them to embrace Islam. In 1414, he marched against Girnar and defeated the Rai who offered submission. He led an attack upon Malwa in 1421 and laid siege to Mandu. Hushang whose army was defeated in two skirmishes secured his pardon by promising fealty in the future. The last notable expedition was undertaken by the Sultan in 1437 to assist Prince Masud Khan, grandson of Hushang of Malwa, who had fled from the tyranny of Mahmud Khilji, the murderer of his father and the usurper of his ancestral dominions. Mandu was besieged and the usurper Mahmud Khilji was defeated in

a hotly contested engagement. But the sudden outbreak of a severe epidemic spoiled the fruits of victory, and the Sultan was obliged to beat a hasty retreat towards Ahmadabad where he breathed his last in 1441.

Ahmad Shah was a brave and warlike prince; he was a zealous champion of the faith. As long as he lived, he practised the observances of Islam and looked upon war against the Hindus as a religious duty. His love of justice was unequalled. The claims of birth, rank, or kinship were nothing in his eyes, and on one occasion, he had his son-in-law publicly executed in the bazar in circumstances of exceptional barbarity for the murder of an innocent person. The author of the *Mirat-i-Sikandari* justly observes that the "effect of this exemplary punishment lasted from the beginning to the end of the Sultan's reign, and no noble or soldier was concerned in murder."

Ahmad Shah was succeeded by his son Muhammad Shah who was styled as "*Zar bakhsha*" or "bestower of gold." He marched against Champanir, but the Raja called in the aid of the ruler of Malwa, and the combined armies of Malwa and Champanir put him to flight. His nobles conspired against him and caused his death by poison in 1451. His son Qutb-ud-din, who was placed upon the throne, spent a large part of his time in expeditions against the Rana of Chittor. After a short reign of eight years and a half he died in 1459, and was succeeded by his uncle Daud, a notorious profligate, who by his meanness of character so offended the nobles that within a week of his accession to the throne they deposed him and installed in his place Fatah Khan, a grandson of Ahmad Shah, under the title of

Mahmud, commonly known as Mahmud Bīgaḍa, in 1458 A.D.

Mahmud Bigada, 1459–1511 A.D.

Mahmud Bīgaḍa may rightly be called the greatest of the Gujarat kings. The author of the *Mirāt-i-Sikandari* gives a highly amusing account of his habits in these words:

> "Notwithstanding his high dignity and royalty, he had an enormous appetite. The full daily allowance of food for the Sultan was one *man* of Gujarat weight. In eating this he put aside five *sirs* of boiled rice, and before going to sleep he used to make it up into a pasty and place one-half of it on the right-hand side of his couch and the other half on the left, so that on whichever side he awoke he might find something to eat, and might then go to sleep again. In the morning after saying his prayers, he took a cup full of honey and a cup of butter with a hundred or a hundred and fifty golden plantains He often used to say, 'If God had not raised Mahmud to the throne of Gujarat, who would have satisfied his hunger?'"

Mahmud was a brave and warlike prince. He rescued Nizam Shah Bahmani from Mahmud Khilji of Malwa and compelled th Rai of Junagarh to acknowledge his authority. He suppressed the pirates who infested the sea-coast of Gujarat and secured the submission of the Hindu chief. The Rajputs of Champanir were the next to submit and the fort was surrendered to the Muslims in 1484. Mahmud built a wall round the town of Champanir in commemoration of his victory and renamed it Muhammadabad.

Towards the close of his reign in 1507 he led an expedition against the Portuguese, who had securely established themselves on the Western Coast, and cut off the trade of the Muslims. He allied himself with the Sultan of Turkey, who with a view to put an end to the Portuguese interference with overland trade fitted out a fleet of twelve ships and despatched 15,000 men, commanded by Mir Hozem, to attack their possessions in India. The Portuguese at last obtained a victory which established their power on the sea-coast and gave them an undisputed command of the sea-borne trade.

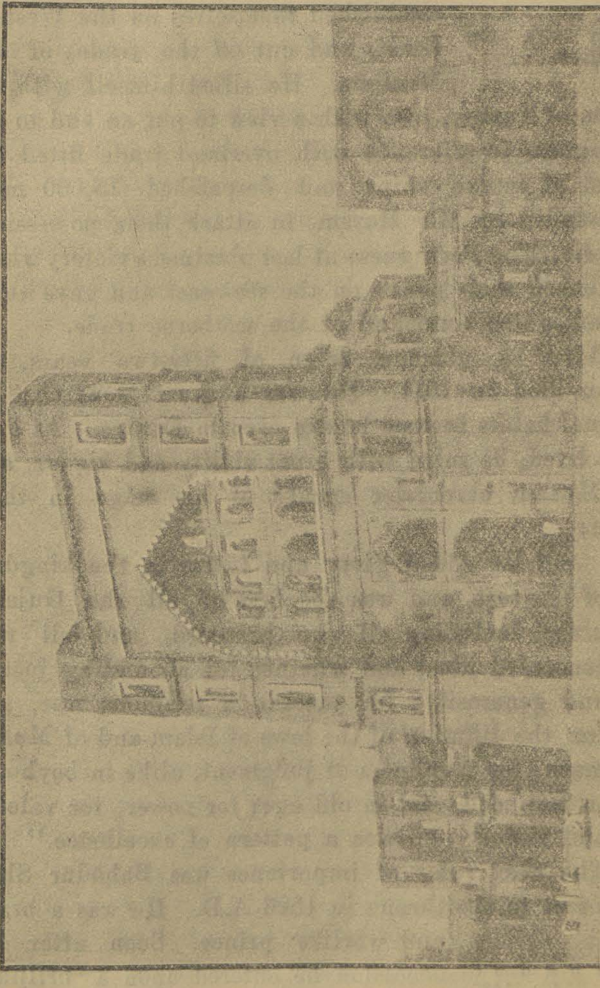
War with the Portuguese.

After a glorious reign of fifty-two years, the Sultan died in 1511. He was a great monarch; his personal habits became known even in Europe. As long as he lived, he ruled with great ability and vigour, and the Muslim chronicler speaks of his reign in these words:

> "He added glory and lustre to the kingdom of Gujarat, and was the best of all the Gujarat kings, including all who preceded, and all who succeeded him; and whether for abounding justice and generosity; for success in religious war, and for the diffusion of the laws of Islam and of Musalmans; for soundness of judgment, alike in boyhood, in manhood, and in old age; for power, for valour, and victory—he was a pattern of excellence."

The next ruler of importance was Bahadur Shah who came to the throne in 1526 A.D. He was a brave and warlike prince. Soon after his accession he entered upon a brilliant career of conquest and annexation. He captured Mandu and Chanderi

Bahadur Shah, 1526—1537 A.D.



Atala Masjid.

and stormed the fort of Chittor in 1534. Bahadur's ambition alarmed Humayun who marched against him, captured Mandu and Champanir, and occupied Gujarat. But Bahadur who was a capable military leader soon collected a large force, and with its help defeated the imperialists and recovered Gujarat. His attempt to expel the Portuguese from the island of Diu met with failure. They conspired against him and had him barbarously murdered on board ship when he was barely thirty-one years of age. After Bahadur's death Gujarat fell into a state of anarchy and disorder. Rival factions set up puppet kings who followed one another in rapid succession. Such disorders continued until the annexation of the province to the Mughal empire by Akbar in 1572.

Jaunpur.

When Firuz undertook his second expedition against Sikandar Shah of Bengal in 1359-60 A.D., he was obliged to halt at Zafrabad[3] during the rains. It was there that he conceived the idea of founding a town in the neighbourhood which might serve as a *point d' appui* for his military operations in Bengal. On the bank of the

3 Zafrabad was an old town. The inscription on the gate of the palace of Hazarat-i-Chiragh-i-Hind shows that the name was known in 721 A.H. in the time of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq, king of Delhi. It is a mistake to think that the town was founded by Prince Zafar, governor of Firuz Tughluq, in 1360 A.D.

The last line of the inscription runs thus: "As the city was acquired by conquest and re-peopled, it was given the name of Zafrabad."

Fasih-ud-din, The Sharqi Monuments of Jaunpur, p. 105 (Inscription No. 1).

Also see Führer's note on Zafrabad in "The Sharqi Architecture of Jaunpur," pp. 64—66.

river Gumti he caused a new town to be built, which was named Jaunpur to commemorate the name of his illustrious cousin, Muhammad Jūnā, and spared no pains to make it beautiful and attractive. After the death of Firuz in 1388, nothing of importance occurred in the history of Jaunpur until the rise to power of Khwājā Jahān in the reign of Muhammad. Khwājā Jahān, whose real name was Sarwar, was a eunuch, who had attained to high position by sheer dint of merit. The title of Khwājā Jahān was conferred upon him in 1389, and he was elevated to the rank of Wazir. A little later, when the affairs of the fiefs of Hindustan fell into confusion through the turbulence of the "base infidels," Khwājā Jahān received from Mahmud Tughluq in 1394 the title of *Malik-us-sharq* or lord of the east, and the administration of all Hindustan from Kanauj to Bihar was entrusted to him. Forthwith the new governor marched into the interior of the Doab, and suppressing the rebellions in Etawah, Kol, and Kanauj, proceeded to Jaunpur to assume charge of his office. In a short time he brought under his sway the fiefs of Kanauj, Kara, Oudh, Sandila, Dalmau, Bahraich, Bihar, and Tirhut, and subdued the refractory Hindu chieftains. So great was his power that the Rai of Jajnagar and the ruler of Lakhnautī acknowledged his authority, and sent him the number of elephants which they had formerly sent as tribute to Delhi. The confusion and anarchy caused by Timur's invasion favoured the Khwājā's ambitious plans, and he declared himself independent and assumed the title of Atabak-i-Āzam.

The most remarkable ruler of Jaunpur was Ībrahim (1400—1440), a man of versatile talents who called himself Shams-ud-din Ibrahim Shah Sharqi. Mahmud

Tughluq who was a puppet in the hands of Iqbāl Khan wished to escape from the latter's galling tutelage. While Iqbāl was encamped at Kanauj, Mahmud effected his escape under the pretext of going on a hunting excursion, approached Ibrahim, and solicited his aid against Iqbāl. But Ibrahim made no response to his appeal. Thus disappointed and humiliated, Mahmud returned to the Delhi army and quietly took possession of Kanauj. Iqbāl Khan made an attempt to recover the place, but Mahmud offered successful resistance in 1405.

Iqbāl's unexpected death in a battle against Khizr Khan, the governor of Multan, left the field clear for Mahmud, and some of the Amirs at Delhi invited him to take charge of government. Ibrahim judged it a favourable opportunity to recover his lost fief of Kanauj, but he was opposed by the Delhi army, and he withdrew to Jaunpur. Mahmud returned to Delhi, but no sooner was his back turned than Ibrahim mobilised his forces and captured Kanauj after a siege of four months. Success emboldened him to carry his inroads into the Delhi territory in 1407, but the news of the advance of Muzaffar Shah of Gujarat, who had overpowered the ruler of Dhar, compelled him to abandon the conquered districts of Sambhal and Bulandshahr and to return to Jaunpur. Soon afterwards Ibrahim marched against Qadr Khan of Kalpi, but he had to abandon the siege. Meanwhile a great change was brought about in Delhi politics by Khizr Khan's elevation to the throne on May 23, 1414.

Ibrahim was a great lover of art and letters. He extended his patronage to eminent scholars who made Jaunpur a famous seat of learning in the east. The

insecurity of life which followed the invasion of Timur drove many distinguished literary men to his court, the most widely known of whom was Shihab-ul-din Malik-ul-ulama, who dedicated several of his works to his generous patron. The long interval of peace enabled the Sultan to construct beautiful buildings to adorn his capital. The Atala mosque was finished in 1408 which stands to this day as a monument of Ibrahim's magnificent tastes.

But peace did not last long. The peculiar circumstances of the time rapidly brought about a collision between Delhi and Jaunpur. Ibrahim and his successors contended for years against the rulers of Delhi; and these wars will be described in their proper place.

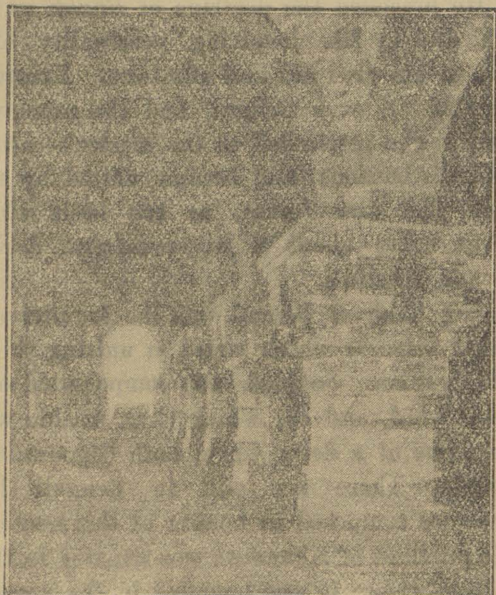
It was the timid policy of Firuz Tughluq which had brought about the separation of Bengal from the empire of Delhi. The wars between Firuz and Shams-ud-din and his successor Sikandar Shah have been described in a previous chapter. Although these rulers occasionally sent presents to the Sultan of Delhi, they were in reality independent.

The establishment of the power of the Husaini dynasty opened a new era in Bengal. The first ruler of the dynasty, Husain Shah (1493—1519), was a man of ability who governed the country wisely and well. He fully consolidated his authority in the various provinces of his kingdom so that not a single rebellion broke out during his reign. He built mosques and founded other charitable institutions and granted pensions to learned and pious men. His son Nusrat Shah (1518—30 A.D.) who came to the throne after his death was an equally remarkable ruler. He enlarged the boundaries of his

Bengal.

kingdom by conquest and annexation and became a prince of substance in the country.

Babar in his *Memoirs* mentions him among the powerful princes of Hindustan. Like his father, Nusrat was fond of learning and took great interest in architecture. He built several mosques, which are known to this day for their beauty and massive design. After the decline of the independent dynasty of



Bengal kings power passed into the hands of the Afghans. Sher Shah made himself master of the east after defeating the Mughal Emperor Humayun and fully established his authority in Bihar and Bengal. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries there was

much religious stir in Bengal. Ibn Batūtā, the Moor, who travelled in Bengal in the fourteenth century, speaks of 150 *gaddis* of faqirs in Bengal in Fakhr-ud-din's time. It was during this period that the impact of Hinduism and Islam set in motion new forces which tended to bring the Hindus and Muslims together, and gave a new colour to Hindu religion. The cult of Vaiṣṇavism made great progress in Bengal, and when Chaitanya appeared upon the scene it prospered wonderfully. He preached the doctrine of *Bhakti* or personal devotion, and by his inspiring personality electrified the souls of his disciples and admirers. Kriṣṇa's name was chanted all over Bengal, and the numerous men and women who responded to the master's call ignored all social distinctions, and became united by the bond of love. The new forces, as has been said before, tended to bring about a *rapprochement* between the Hindus and Muslims.

Husain Shah of Bengal was the founder of a new cult called *Satyapīr* which aimed at uniting the Hindus and the Muslims. *Satyapīr* was compounded of *Satya*, a Sanskrit word, and *Pīr* which is an Arabic word. It was the name of a deity whom both communities were to worship. There are still in Bengali literature several poems composed in honour of this new deity.

The province of Khandesh was situated in the valley of the Tapti river; it was bounded in the north by the

Khandesh.

Vindhya and Satpura ranges and in the south by the Deccan plateau, in the east by Berar and in the west by the subah of Gujarat. It was a part of Muhammad Tughluq's empire, and continued to be a feudatory of Delhi during the reign of Firuz, who entrusted it to Malik Raja

Farūqī, one of his personal attendants, in the year 1370. After the death of Firuz, when the empire of Delhi broke up, Malik Raja, a man of adventurous and ambitious spirit, declared his independence. He was a broad-minded ruler who treated the Hindus well and tried to promote the welfare of his subjects. After his death in 1399 he was succeeded by his son Malik Nāsir who captured the famous fortress of Asirgarh from Asā Ahir, a chieftain of considerable power. Malik Nāsir maintained a firm hold over the territories he had inherited from his father and when he died in 1437, he left to his successor a united Khandesh. The princes, who followed him, possessed no ability and during their reigns the fortunes of Khandesh rapidly declined. After the death of Adil, one of Nāsir's grandsons, in 1520, a series of weak rulers followed who found it difficult to resist the encroachments of foreign powers. The latter took full advantage of the weakness of the central power and the factious fights of the nobles. In 1601 the fortress of Asirgarh was conquered by Akbar, and Khandesh was annexed to the empire. The local dynasty ceased to exist.

(ii) THE BAHMANI KINGDOM

The break-up of the empire during Muhammad's reign led the Amirs of the Deccan to revolt and set up an independent kingdom at Daulatabad with Ismail Makh as their king. Ismail, being a man of retired habits, resigned in favour of Hasan, a brave soldier who was elected king in 1347. Firishta relates that Hasan was originally employed in the service of Gangu, a Brahman

The rise of Bahmani Dynasty.

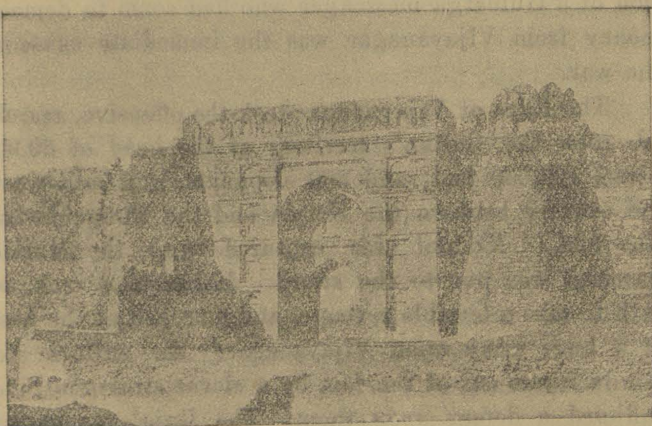
astrologer of Delhi, who enjoyed the confidence of Sultan Muhammad Tughluq. One day while Hasan was ploughing the land of his master, he came across a pot full of gold coins which he at once made over to his master. The Brahman was so pleased with Hasan's honesty that he recommended him to Sultan Muhammad who employed him in his service. The Brahman predicted a great destiny for Hasan and expressed a wish, that when he was elevated to royal dignity he should appoint him as his minister. To this Hasan agreed, and when he was elevated to the kingly office, he assumed the title Bahmani out of gratefulness to his old benefactor. Modern research has exploded Firishta's error, and the view now generally accepted is that Hasan was descended from Bahman bin Isfandiyar, king of Persia. He called himself a descendant of Bahmanshah, and this name is inscribed on his coins.[4]

He chose Gulbarga as his capital. The whole country was divided into *tarafs* which were assigned to the Amirs who had rendered him good service in the recent war. Each of these Amirs was granted a Jagir on feudal tenure and had to render military service to the king. Hasan now embarked upon a brilliant career of conquest. The fort of Qandhar was recovered, and his officer, Sikander Khan, reduced Bidar and Malkaid. Goa, Dabhol, Kolapur, and Telingana were all con-

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[4] The author of the *Burhān-i-Māsir* clearly states that Hasan traced his pedigree from Bahman bin Isfandiyar. He is supported by Nizamuddin Ahmad, the author of the *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Ahmad Amin Razi, the author of the *Half-Iqlim* and Haji-ud-Dabir, the author of the *Arabic History of Gujarat*. This statement is also supported by the evidence of inscriptions and coins.

quered, and towards the close of his reign his dominions extended from the east of Daulatabad to Bhongir now in the Nizam's dominions and from the river Waingaṅga in the north to the river Kriṣṇā in the south. The pressure of unremitting exertions told upon his health, and he died in 1459. He was succeeded by Muhammad Shah I, whom he had nominated as his heir on his death-bed.



Gateway, Fort Bidar.

Muhammad Shah I

He continued his father's policy of conquest. The principal event of his reign was the war with the neighbouring Hindu kingdoms of Vijayanagar and Telingana. He defeated the Hindus who fought with great courage and determination Their country was plundered and temples were razed to the ground. Muhammad enjoyed peace for about a decade. But the

barbarous execution of the Telingana Prince for a trivial offence again lit up the flames of war. The Hindus would not tamely submit, and after a prolonged fight of two years a peace was made, and the Raja agreed to surrender the fort of Golkunda and to pay a huge war indemnity of thirty-three lakhs. Golkunda was fixed as the boundary line between the two kingdoms. Soon afterwards war with Vijayanagar broke out, which assumed formidable dimensions. The humiliation of a Gulbarga messenger who had come to demand money from Vijayanagar was the immediate cause of the war.

The Raya of Vijayanagar took the offensive, marched into the Sultan's territory at the head of 30,000 horse, 100,000 foot, and 300 elephants, and laid waste the country between the Kriṣṇā and the Tungabhadra. The fort of Mudgal was captured, and the Muslim garrison was put to the sword. Muhammad took an oath to take a terrible revenge, and marched at the head of a huge army upon Vijayanagar. He enticed the Hindu forces out of the fort by a clever stratagem, and inflicted a defeat upon them. The Raja's camp was raided, though he effected his escape, but his soldiers and officers as well as the inhabitants of the neighbourhood were butchered by the ruthless Muslim soldiers. Peace was at last made with the Raya of Vijayanagar, and the Sultan took an oath never to shed the blood of innocent men in future.

Muhammad Shah acted ruthlessly in carrying out his domestic policy. He ordered all public distilleries to be closed and put down lawlessness with a high hand. After a reign of 17 years and 7 months he died in 1373 and was succeeded by his son Mujāhid Shah.

Mujāhid, 1373—77.

Mujāhid showed a great preference for the Persians and the Turks, and thus by his policy of exclusion he revived the old feuds and jealousies, between the Deccanis and the foreigners, which had wrecked the government of Muhammad Tughluq. But the most important problem of the time was, as usual, war with Vijayanagar over the possession of the Raichur Doab, and the forts of Raichur and Mudgal. He marched twice on Vijayanagar, but had to retreat on both occasions on account of the combination of the Hindus. Peace was concluded, but the Sultan was murdered by his cousin, Daud, who usurped the throne in 1377. He in his turn was murdered in the following year by a slave, hired by Ruh Parwar Agha, the foster-sister of Mujāhid.

After Daud's death, Muhammad Shah II came to the throne in 1378. He was a man of peace. The cessation of war enabled him to devote his time to the pursuit of literature and science. He built mosques, established public schools and monasteries, and never allowed anyone to act against the Holy Law. No rebellion occurred during his reign, and the nobles and officers all loyally served their master. The Sultan took a great interest in the welfare of his subjects; and once when famine broke out, he employed ten thousand bullocks to bring grain from Malwa and Gujarat to mitigate its severity. In the last year of his life his sons conspired to seize the throne. He died in 1397 and was succeeded by his sons who were deprived of sovereignty after a brief period of six months by Firuz, a grandson of Sultan Alauddin Hasan Shah. Firuz came to Gulbarga, and with the help of the nobles and officers seized the throne in February, 1397.

The author of the *Burhān-i-Māsir* describes him as "a good, just and generous king who supported himself by copying the Quran, and the ladies of whose *haram* used to support themselves by embroidering garments and selling them." The same authority further says:—"As a ruler he was without an equal, and many records of his justice still remain on the page of time." But this seems to be an exaggeration, for Firishta clearly states that although he observed the practices of his religion with strictness, he drank hard, was passionately fond of music, and maintained a large *haram* which included women of several nationalities It is said that about 800 women were daily admitted into the royal seraglio by means of *muta* marriage. Frank and jovial to a degree, Firuz took delight in social intercourse, and treated his companions without the slightest reserve, but he never allowed public matters to be discussed at such convivial gatherings.

Firuz Shah, 1397—1422.

As usual, the struggle with Vijayanagar began for the possession of the fort of Mudgal in 1398. Hari Hara II marched an army into the Raichur Doab. Firuz also mobilised his forces, but he had also to check the Raja of Kehrla, who had invaded Berar. The Raya was defeated and a treaty was made which restored the *status quo*, although the Raya had to pay a large sum as ransom for the release of the Brahman captives seized during the war.

The war was renewed again, and in 1419 Firuz led an unprovoked attack upon the fort of Pangal, a dependency of Vijayanagar. The Sultan's troops were defeated owing to the outbreak of pestilence, and the victorious Hindus butchered the Musalmans merciless-

ly, ravaged their country, and desecrated their mosques.

Firuz was obliged by his failing health to leave the affairs of state in the hands of his slaves. His brother Ahmad Shah became the most powerful man in the kingdom towards the close of his reign, and succeeded to the throne after his death in 1422.

Ahmad Shah. 1422—35.

He ascended the throne without opposition. His minister advised him to put to death the late Sultan's son in order to ensure his safety, but he refused to do so, and provided him with a liberal Jagīr at Firuzabad, where the prince utterly devoid of any political ambition frittered away his time in the pursuit of pleasure. He waged war against Vijayanagar and mercilessly put to death men, women, and children to the number of 20,000. This cruelty of Ahmad Shah so exasperated the Hindus that they determined to take his life; and when he was engaged in a hunting excursion, they chased him with tremendous fury, but he was saved by his armour-bearer, Abdul Qadir. Ahmad Shah now reduced the people of Vijayanagar to such distress that Deva Raya was compelled to sue for peace. He agreed to pay all arrears of tribute, and sent his son with 30 elephants, laden with money, jewels and other articles of untold value to the royal camp.

In 1424 he defeated the Raja of Warangal and annexed a large portion of his territory to his own dominions. He also defeated the Muslim rulers of Malwa and the neighbouring states, massacred a large number of men, and captured rich booty.

He assumed the title of '*Wali*' and on his return laid the foundation of the city of Bidar which

afterwards became the recognised capital of the Bahmani kingdom. In 1429 he went to war with the chiefs of the Konkan, and fought an indecisive battle with the ruler of Gujarat. The last expedition of the reign was against Telingana to put down a Hindu revolt, after which he retired from public life and resigned the throne to his son, Prince Zafar Khan. He died of illness in 1435.

Zafar Khan ascended the throne under the title of Alauddin II. He began his reign well, but later on his character degenerated, and he spent his time in debauchery and pleasure.

Alauddin II, 1435—57.

His brother, Muhammad, whom he treated well, rose in rebellion and seized the Raichur Doab, Bijapur, and other districts with the help of Vijayanagar. But he was ultimately defeated, and pardoned, and allowed to hold the district of Raichur as Jagīr. But the hereditary enemy of Alauddin was the Raya of Vijayanagar who now led a wanton attack against the Sultan's dominions. At first the struggle was indecisive but after a siege lasting for some time, Deva Raya agreed to pay the stipulated tribute. The administration was much disturbed by the feuds of the Deccani Muslims who were mostly Sunnis and foreigners like the Arabs, Turks, Persians, and Mughals who professed the Shia faith and thus led to a serious crime. In 1454 Khalf Hasan Malik-ul-Tujjār suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of a Hindu chief in the Konkan. As the party were moving in order to save their lives, the Deccani chiefs led the Sultan to believe that they meditated treason. They were invited to a feast and treacherously murdered. Alauddin died in 1457.

Alauddin was a profligate, but he did not wholly neglect the interests of his subjects. He built mosques, established public schools and charitable institutions. Order was maintained throughout the kingdom, and thieves and brigands were severely punished. Though not deeply religious himself, he strictly enforced the observances of the faith, and respected the feelings of his co-religionists.

Alauddin was succeeded by his eldest son Humayun. He was a monster of cruelty. He might well be praised for his learning, eloquence and wit, but at the same time we would regret his fierce disposition. He showed no compassion in shedding blood. But he was fortunate in securing the services of Mahmud Gāwān, who served the state with rare fidelity and devotion to the last day of his life. The main interest of his reign lies in the hideous forms of cruelty which he practised with savage brutality. After the conspiracy which resulted in the release of his brothers, Hasan and Yahya, from prison, he caused Hasan in his own presence to be thrown before a ferocious tiger who instantly killed and devoured him. The king's ferocity exceeded all bounds.

Humayun, 1457—61.

In October, 1461, Humayun died a natural death; but according to Firishta the more probable account is that he was murdered by one of his servants in a state of drunkenness.

After Humayun's death Nizam was selected as king by Khwājā Jahān, Mahmud Gāwān and the queen-mother, who was one of the most remarkable women that have appeared in the east. Nizam, being a child

Nizam Shah, 1461—63.

of eight years, the government was in the hands of the Dowager-Queen Makhdumah Jahan. Aided by Mahmud Gāwān, she set at liberty all the innocent persons who had been thrown into prison by her husband, and reinstated in their offices all the servants of the state who had been dismissed without cause.

She repelled an attack led by the Rais of Orissa and Telingana; but when Mahmud Khilji of Malwa occupied Bidar, the Deccan army under Mahmud Gāwān and Khwājā Jahān suffered a crushing defeat in 1461. The queen-mother secured in this hour of need the assistance of the ruler of Gujarat on whose approach Mahmud Khilji retreated to his country. A second attempt by Mahmud Khilji was unsuccessful for the same reason. Nizam Shah died all of a sudden in 1463, when he was about to be married.

Muhammad Shah III, 1463—82.

Muhammad Shah, brother of the late king, was selected by the nobles. The new king had the Khwājā Jahān murdered on account of the embezzlement of public funds, and Mahmud Gāwān became the chief authority in the state. He had unlimited power. He loyally served the state for several years. He fought wars, subdued countries, and increased the Bahmani dominions to an extent never reached before. He was sent with a large force against the Hindu kingdom of Konkan, and compelled the chief to surrender the fortress of Kalna, the modern Visalgarh. He also compelled the Raja of Orissa to pay tribute, but the most remarkable exploit of the Sultan was the raid on Kanchi or Kanjivaram in the course of a campaign against Narasinha, Raya of Vijayanagar.

The city was captured and an immense booty fell into the hands of the victors.

In 1474 a severe famine occurred in the Deccan which is known as the Bijapur famine. In 1470 Athnasius Nikitin, a Russian merchant, visited Bidar. He has made observations regarding the country, its government, and the people. He also gives a description of the Sultan's hunting expeditions and his palace.

Administrative Reform.

Mahmud Gāwān was a great administrator. In spite of the feuds between the two parties in the kingdom—the Deccanis and the Iranīs—which were a source of great trouble, Mahmud Gāwān was able to carry out his work of reform with success. No department seems to have escaped his attention. He organised the finances, improved the administration of justice, encouraged public education, and instituted a survey of village lands to make the state demand of revenue just and equitable. Corrupt practices were put down; the army was reformed; better discipline was enforced, and the prospects of soldiers were improved.

Death of Mahmud Gāwān.

But the Deccanis who were jealous of his influence formed a conspiracy against him and forged a letter of treasonable contents, purporting to have been written by him to Narasinha Raya. The king was persuaded to have him murdered as a traitor in a fit of drunkenness. Thus passed away by the cruel hand of the assassin one of the purest characters of the age, and Meadows Taylor rightly observes that with him departed all the cohesion and the power of the Bahmani kingdom.

Character of Mahmud Gāwān.

Mahmud Gāwān was one of the most remarkable mediæval statesmen. He was completely devoted to the state and served it all his life with great ability and distinction. Much has already been said about his public career which was full of unremitting exertions for the benefit of the state. But the Khwājā shone better in private life. He loved simplicity and always felt for the poor. All Muslim chroniclers agree in saying that he was courageous, magnanimous, a lover of justice and free from the vices common to the great men of his age. His wants were few and his time was mostly passed in the company of scholars and divines. He possessed a fine library in his college at Bidar which contained 3,000 books. After the day's toil the learned Khwājā repaired to his college in the evening and there found his most favourite recreation in the company of learned men. He was well-versed in Mathematics, the science of Medicine, literature and was a master of epistolary style. Firishta attributes to him the authorship of two works—the *Rauzat-ul-Insha* and the *Diwan-i-ashr*. But although the Khwājā was pious and learned, he found it difficult to rise above the religious prejudices of the age and often took part in crusades against idolatry. All things said, the murder of such a devoted servant was a grave blunder, and more than anything else it accelerated the ruin of the Bahmani dynasty.

The downfall of the Bahmani kingdom.

Muhammad Shah died in 1482 and was succeeded by his son Mahmud Shah who was only twelve years of age. He turned out an imbecile and spent his time in merriment and revelry. Disorders increased on all

sides, and provincial governors began to declare their independence. The Bahmani kingdom was now restricted to Bidar and the provinces near the capital. Amir Barid, the new minister, was the virtual ruler; he kept Mahmud in a state of humiliating dependence upon himself. After Mahmud's death in 1518 the Bahmani kingdom practically came to an end.

The kingdom broke up into five independent principalities which were:—

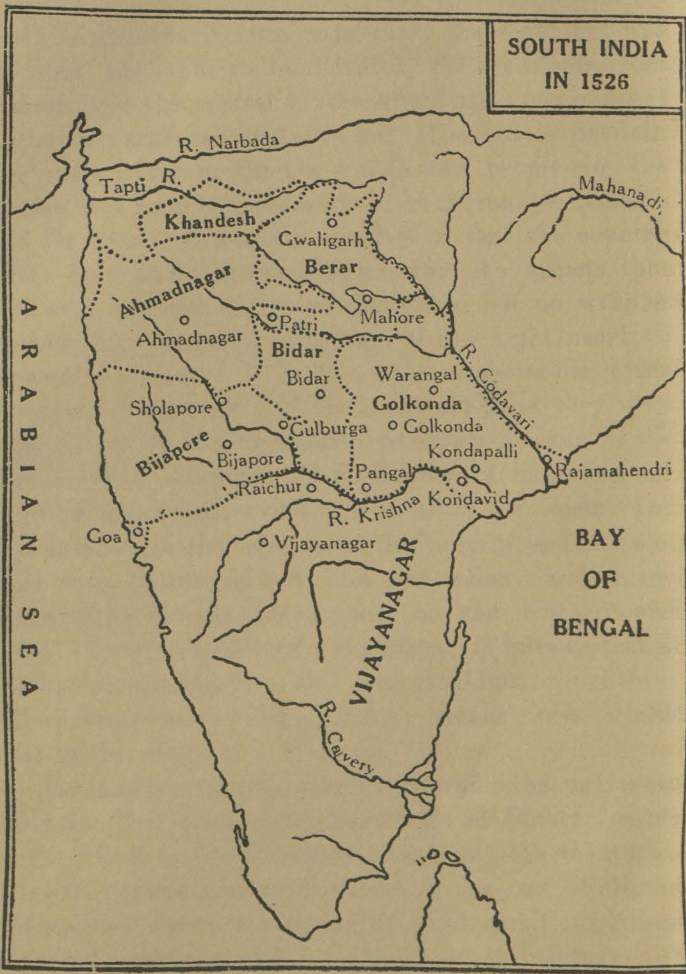
1. The Imad Shahi dynasty of Berar.
2. The Nizam Shahi dynasty of Ahmadnagar.
3. The Adil Shahi dynasty of Bijapur.
4. The Qutb Shahi dynasty of Golkunda.
5. The Barid Shahi dynasty of Bidar.

General remarks.

The Bahmani dynasty contained in all fourteen kings. They were with a few exceptions cruel and ferocious, and never hesitated in shedding the blood of the Hindus. The founder of the dynasty, Hasan Kāngū, was a capable administrator but he too was relentless in his attitude towards the Hindus. His successors were mostly debauched and unprincipled tyrants who were always hampered in their work by the dissensions of the Deccani and foreign Amirs. Attempts at making the administration efficient were made from time to time, but they never succeeded except perhaps during the ministry of Mahmud Gāwān. The Hindus were employed by the state in the lower branches of the administration, but that was inevitable because they had better knowledge and experience of revenue affairs. Mahmud Gāwān reformed the system of revenue, and allowed the agriculturists to pay their dues in cash or

kind. Athnasius Nikitin says that the country was populous, the lands well-cultivated, the roads safe from robbers, and the capital of the kingdom, a magnificent city with parks and promenades. The nobles lived in great magnificence, but the lot of the people in the country was hard and miserable. It is from his remarks that Dr. Smith draws the conclusion that the country must have been sucked dry. But he forgets that mediæval monarchs all over the world felt no scruples in spending the people's money with a light heart on personal pleasures. It is true, the Bahmanids often plundered the property of their enemies, but they were never guilty of levying oppressive exactions even in the time of war. They provided facilities of irrigation for the development of agriculture in their dominions, and took interest in the welfare of the peasantry. Some of them were patrons of art and education, and made endowments for the maintenance of the learned and pious. They were not great builders. The only things worthy of mention are the city of Bidar, which was full of beautiful buildings, and certain forts which exist to this day.

In judging the Bahmanids it would be unfair to apply to their conduct the standards of to-day. Even in the West in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries religious persecution was the order of the day. Religion and politics were often mixed up, and ambitious rulers exploited religious zeal for their own advantage. If we keep this fact in mind, we can neither accept the unqualified praise which Meadows Taylor bestows upon the Bahmanids nor their wholesale condemnation which is to be found in Dr. Vincent Smith's *Oxford History of India.*


SOUTH INDIA
IN 1526
R. Narbada
Tapti R.
Mahanadi
Khandesh
Gwaligarh
Berar
Ahmadnagar
Mahore
Patri
Ahmadnagar
Bidar
R. Godavari
Bidar
Warangal
Golkonda
Sholapore
Golkonda
Gulburga
Bijapore
Bijapore
Kondapalli
Pangal
Rajamahendri
Raichur
Kondavid
R. Krishna
Goa
Vijayanagar
BAY
OF
BENGAL
ARABIAN SEA
VIJAYANAGAR
R. Cavery

THE FIVE MUHAMMADAN KINGDOMS OF THE DECCAN

The Imad Shahi dynasty was founded by Fatah Ullah Imad Shah, originally a Hindu from Carnatic. He made a name in the service of Khān-i-Jahān, the viceroy of Berar, and succeeded him. He was the first to declare his independence. His dynasty ruled till 1574, when it was incorporated in the Nizam Shahi dominions.

Berar.

The Adil Shahi dynasty was founded by Yusuf Adil Khan, a slave purchased by Mahmud Gāwān. But according to Firishta he was a son of Sultan Murad II of Turkey who died in 1451. When his eldest brother Muhammad came to the throne he ordered the expulsion of all the male children of the late Sultan; but Yusuf was saved by the tact of his mother. He rose to high rank through the favour of his patron, Mahmud Gāwān. He declared his independence in 1489.

Bijapur.

His formidable enemy Qāsim Barīd incited the Raya of Vijayanagar to declare war upon Bijapur. But Narasinha suffered a defeat. In 1495 he helped Qasim Barid in defeating Dastur Dinar, the governor of Gulbarga, who had revolted. But he managed to have Gulbarga restored to him and saved his life. Yusuf was anxious to obtain Gulbarga for himself. Qasim was defeated, and his defeat greatly enhanced the prestige of Āli Adil Shah. In 1502 he declared the Shia creed to be the religion of the state, but granted perfect toleration to the Sunnis. Nevertheless, the neighbouring powers joined against him. He fled to Berar, restored the Sunni faith, and withdrew to Khandesh.

Meanwhile Imādul-Mulk wrote to the allies that Amir Barid was using them for his own selfish end. So the Sultans of Ahmadnagar and Golkunda left the field. Amir Barid left alone, was defeated by Yusuf, who entered Bijapur in triumph. Yusuf Adil Shah is one of the most remarkable rulers of the Deccan. He was a patron of letters, and learned men came to his court from Persia, Turkistan, and Rum, and enjoyed his bounty. He was free from bigotry, and religion in his eyes was no bar to public employment. Firishta says that he was 'handsome in person, eloquent in speech, and eminent for his learning, liberality and valour.'

Yūsuf Ādil was followed by Ismail who was only nine years of age at the time of his accession. The affairs of the state were managed by Kamāl Khan, an officer of the late king, but he proved a traitor. His designs were frustrated by the queen-mother who had him assassinated by a slave. Ismail now took the reins of government in his own hand. But he had to fight against Vijayanagar and Ahmadnagar. He was victorious in all his wars, and recovered possession of the Raichur Doab from Vijayanagar. Ismail died in 1534, and was succeeded by Mallu Adil Shah, but he was blinded and dethroned. After him, his brother Ibrahim was proclaimed king.

Ismail Shah.

He first restored the Sunni faith, and replaced all foreigners in his service by the Deccanis and Abyssinians. He defeated the rulers of Bidar, Ahmadnagar, and Golkunda and displayed commendable energy, but debauchery soon brought about his ruin. He fell

Ibrahim Adil Shah I.

ill and died in 1557. He was succeeded by Ali Adil Shah.

The new Sultan restored the Shia faith, and his policy caused discontent in the country. With the help of the Raya of Vijayanagar he ravaged the Ahmadnagar territory in 1558. The Hindus perpetrated the most horrible excesses which disgusted even their ally Ali Adil. The growing power of Vijayanagar seemed to be a menace to the existence of the Muslim monarchies. Bijapur, Bidar, Ahmadnagar, Golkunda combined against Vijayanagar and defeated Ram Raja at Talikota in 1565. Ali Adil was assassinated in 1579.

Ali Adil Shah.

The heir to the throne was a minor, and the government was carried on by his mother Chand Bibi who is so famous in Indian history. Ibrahim was successful in a war with Ahmadnagar in 1594, when the Sultan was slain in battle. He died in 1626. He was the most remarkable ruler of his dynasty.

Ibrahim Adil Shah II.

The Adil Shahi kingdom was annexed to the Mughal Empire in 1686 by Aurangzeb.

The Nizam Shahi dynasty was founded by Nizamul-mulk Bahri, the leader of the Deccan party at Bidar. After Mahmud Gāwān's death, he was appointed minister. His son Malik Ahmad was appointed governor of Junir. He intended to join his son, but his plans were foiled by the governor of Bidar, who had him strangled to death with the king's permission. Malik Ahmad declared his independence in 1498 and transferred his court to

Ahmadnagar.

Ahmadnagar. He obtained possession of Daulatabad in 1499 after a hard fight. On his death he was succeeded by his son Burhān Nizam Shah.

Burhān and his successors.

Burhān (1508—53) was a minor; and so the affairs of the state were managed by his father's old officers. He married a Bijapur princess. He fell out with the king of Bijapur, and brought about almost a diplomatic revolution by concluding an alliance with the Raya of Vijayanagar.

In 1553 he laid siege to Bijapur but he died shortly afterwards. The subsequent history of Ahmadnagar is unimportant except for the heroic defence made by Chand Bibi against Prince Murad. Ahmadnagar was finally conquered by the imperialists in 1600.

Golkunda.

The Qutb Shahi dynasty was founded by Qutb-ul-mulk. He was well educated and was originally employed in the secretariat of Mahmud Shah Bahmani. By dint of his ability he rose to be the governor of Telingana. He declared his independence in 1518. On his death in 1543 he was succeeded by a series of weak rulers who maintained their independence against the Mughals until 1687 when Golkunda was finally annexed to the empire by Aurangzeb.

Bidar.

Amir Barid, son of Qasim Barid, assumed the title of king and declared his independence in 1526, when the last Sultan, Kalimullah, fled to Bijapur. The dynasty lingered till 1609, when it was supplanted by the Adil Shahis who annexed the province to their dominions.

(iii) The Rise of Vijayanagar

Foundation of the Empire.

The rise of the kingdom of Vijayanagar dates from the time of the disorders which occurred during the reign of Muhammad Tughluq. Sewell, the historian of the Vijayanagar Empire, gives seven traditionary accounts of the origin of the dynasty.[5] But the most probable account is that which attributes its origin to two brothers, Harī Hara and Bukkā, who were employed in the treasury of Pratap Rudra Deva Kākatiya of Warangal. They fled from their country in 1323 when it was overrun by the Muslims. They took up service with the Raja of Anagondi in the Raichur district, but they were taken to Delhi when that country fell into the hands of the Muslims. This excited the Hindus so much that they rose in rebellion and the Sultan released the two brothers, and restored them to the country of Anagondi which they held as tributaries of the empire of Delhi. With the help of the famous sage and scholar Vidyāraṇya (literally, forest of learning) they founded in the year 1336 A.D. the imperial city on the bank of the Tungbhadra merely as a place of shelter against the persecutions and aggressions of the Muslim invaders, and Harī Hara became the first ruler of the dynasty.

The Early kings.

By the year 1340 Harī Hara had established his sway over the valley of the Tungbhadra, portions of the Konkan, and the Malabar coast.

Harī Hara and his brothers never assumed royal titles. Muslim historians tell us that Harī Hara took

5 Sewell, A Forgotten Empire, pp. 20—22.

part in the confederacy organised by Krisṇa Nāyak, son of Pratap Rudra Deva of Warangal, in 1314 to drive the Muslims out of the Deccan. The evidence of inscriptions also points to the fact that Harī Hara I assisted in this confederacy and fought against the Muslim forces. The death of the last king of the Hoysala dynasty—Virūpākṣa Ballala in 1346 coupled with the disappearance of the power of the Sultan of Delhi enabled the valiant brothers to bring under their control the dominions of the Hoysalas. The brothers then embarked upon a brilliant career of conquest. Their efforts were crowned with success, so much so that within the lifetime of Harī Hara, the kingdom extended from the Krisṇā in the north to the neighbourhood of the Kaveri in the south, and comprised the whole country situated between the eastern and western oceans. But the northward expansion of the rising kingdom was checked by the Bahmanids. Both tried to be supreme in the Deccan, and their ambitions led them to fight against each other with great ferocity and pertinacity. Harī Hara divided his kingdom into provinces, which he entrusted to scions of the royal family and trustworthy viceroys, whose loyalty had been proved by long and faithful service. Harī Hara died about 1353, and was succeeded by his brother Bukkā who completed the building of the city of Vijayanagar, and enlarged its dimensions. He is described in the inscriptions as the master of the eastern, western, and southern oceans. This is no doubt an exaggeration; but we might easily conclude that he was a remarkable ruler. He sent a mission to the emperor of China, and waged wars against the Bahmani kingdom. He was a tolerant and liberal-minded ruler; and it is said that on one occasion

he brought about a reconciliation between the Jains and the Vaiṣṇavas by his intervention.

Bukkā died in 1379, and was succeeded by Harī Hara II the first king of the dynasty who assumed imperial titles and called himself Maharajadhiraj. He endowed temples, and tried to consolidate his vast possessions. Sewell writes that he was always a lover of peace, and Vincent Smith says that he had a quiet time so far as the Muslims were concerned, and enjoyed leisure which he devoted to consolidating his dominion over the whole of Southern India, including Trichinopoly and Conjeevaram (Kanchi). He turned his attention to other countries of the south, and his general, Gunda, conquered several new provinces. Harī Hara II died on the 30th August, 1404, and was succeeded by his son who ruled only for a short time. He was succeeded by Deva Raya who had to fight again and again against the Bahmanids. Firishta says that on one occasion Firuz compelled him to give his daughter in marriage to the Sultan. But we may well doubt whether the marriage took place, for the author of the *Burhān-i-Māsir*, who is a detailed and accurate chronicler, does not make even a casual mention of this marriage, nor is there any mention of it in the inscriptions. Deva Raya died in 1410, and was succeeded by his son Vijaya Raya who reigned for 9 years. He was succeeded by Deva Raya II.

Harī Hara II.

Deva Raya followed the military traditions of his predecessors and declared war against the Bahmanids. Being impressed by the superior strength of the Muslim cavalry, he employed Muslim horsemen in his

Deva Raya II 1419—1446 A.D.

service, but even this somewhat unusual step proved of no avail. When the war broke out again in 1443, the Muslims defeated the Raya's forces, and compelled him to pay tribute. During Deva Raya II's reign Vijayanagar was visited by two foreigners— one of them was Nicolo Conti, an Italian sojourner, and the other was Abdur Razzāq an envoy from Persia. Both have left valuable observations regarding the city and the empire of Vijayanagar.

Nicolo Conti.

He visited Vijayanagar about the year 1420 or 1421 and he describes it thus:—

"The great city of Bizengalia is situated near very steep mountains. The circumference of the city is sixty miles; its walls are carried up to the mountains and enclose the valleys at their foot, so that its extent is thereby increased. In this city there are estimated to be ninety thousand men fit to bear arms.

"The inhabitants of this region marry as many wives as they please, who are burnt with their dead husbands. Their king is more powerful than all other kings of India. He takes to himself 12,000 wives, of whom 4,000 follow him on foot wherever he may go, and are employed solely in the service of the kitchen. A like number, more handsomely equipped, ride on horse-back. The remainder are carried by men in litters, of whom 2,900 or 3,000 are selected as his wives on condition that at his death they should voluntarily burn themselves with him, which is considered to be a great honour for them.

"At a certain time of the year their idol is

carried through the city, placed between two chariots, in which are young women richly adorned, who sing hymns to the god, and accompanied by a great concourse of people. Many, carried away by the fervour of their faith, cast themselves on the ground before the wheels, in order that they may be crushed to death—a mode of death which they say is very acceptable to their god, others making an incision in their side, and inserting a rope thus through their body, hang themselves to the chariot by way of ornament and thus suspended and half-dead accompany their idol. This kind of sacrifice they consider the best and most acceptable of all.

"Thrice in the year they keep festivals of special solemnity. On one of these occasions the males and females of all ages, having bathed in the rivers or the sea, clothe themselves in new garments, and spend three entire days in singing, dancing and feasting. On another of these festivals they fix up within their temples, and on the outside on their roofs an innumerable number of lamps of oil of *susimanni* which are kept burning day and night. On the third, which lasts nine days, they set up in all the highways large beams, like the masts of small ships, to the upper part of which are attached pieces of very beautiful cloth of various kinds interwoven with gold. On the summit of each of these beams is each day placed a man of pious aspiration dedicated to religion capable of enduring all things with equanimity who is to pray for the favour of god. These men are assailed by the people, who pelt them with orange, lemons, and other odoriferous fruits, all of which

they bear most patiently. There are also three other festival days, during which they sprinkle all passers-by, even the king and queen themselves, with saffron water, placed for the purpose by the wayside. This is received by all with much laughter."

Abdur Razzāq's account of Vijayanagar.

Twenty years after Nicolo Conti, Abdur Razzāq,[6] an envoy from Persia, visited Vijayanagar in 1442. He stayed in the famous city till the beginning of April, 1443. He gives a detailed account of the city and its Raya, and his observations are as follows:—

The Raya.

"One day messengers came from the king to summon me, and towards the evening I went to the court, and presented five beautiful horses and two trays each containing nine pieces of damask and satin. The king was seated in a great state in the forty-pillared hall, and a great crowd of Brahmans and others stood on the right and left of him. He was clothed in a robe of *Zaitun satin* and he had around his neck a collar composed of pure pearls of regal excellence, the value of which a jeweller would find it difficult to calculate. He was of an olive colour, of a spare body and rather tall. He was exceedingly young, for there was only some slight down upon his cheeks and none upon his chin. His whole appearance was very prepossessing . . . The

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6 A detailed account of Abdur Razzāq is given in the *Matla-us-Sadain*, Elliot, IV, pp. 105—120. He was born at Herat in 1413. Shah Rukh of Persia sent him as an ambassador to Vijayanagar. He died in 1482.

daily provision forwarded to me comprised two sheep, four couple of fowls, five *mans* of rice, one *man* of butter, one *man* of sugar, and two *varahas* gold. This occurred every day. Twice a week I was summoned to the presence towards the evening when the king asked me several questions respecting the Khakan-i-said, and each time I received a packet of betel, and purse of *famous* and *miskals* of camphor.

The City.

"The city of Bisanagar is such that eye has not seen nor ear heard of any place resembling it upon the whole earth. It is so built that it has seven fortified walls, one within the other. Beyond the circuit of the outer wall there is an esplanade extending for about fifty yards, in which stones are fixed near one another to the height of a man; one-half buried firmly in the earth, and the other half rises above it, so that neither foot nor horse, however bold, can advance with facility near the outer wall.

The Bazars and offices.

". . . . . Each class of men belonging to each profession has shops contiguous the one to the other; the jewellers sell publicly in the bazar pearls, rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. In this agreeable locality, as well as in the king's palace, one sees numerous running streams and canals formed of chiselled stone, polished and smooth.

"On the left of the Sultan's portico, rises the *diwan khana* (the council house) which is extremely large and looks like a palace. In front of it is a hall, the height of which is above the stature of a

F 28

man, its length thirty *ghez*, and its breadth ten. In it is placed the *daftarkhana* (the archives), and here sit the scribes . . . In the middle of this palace upon a high estrade is seated an eunuch, called Daiang who alone presides over the diwan. At the end of the hall stand tchobdars (hussars) drawn up in line. Every man who comes upon any business, passes between the tchobdars, offers a small present, prostrates himself with his face to the ground, then rising up explains the business which brought him there and the Daiang pronounces his opinion, according to the principles of justice adopted in this kingdom, and no one thereafter is allowed to make any appeal."

Deva Raya II probably died in 1449, and was succeeded by his two sons one after the other. But they were too weak to manage the large empire which he had left to them. The throne was usurped by Saluva-Narasinha, the most powerful noble in Kārnāta and Telingana. This is known as the first usurpation. Saluva-Narasinha's power did not last long. His successor had to make room for his redoubtable general, Naresa Nayaka of Tuluva descent, who became the founder of a new dynasty. The most famous king of this dynasty was Krisṇa Deva Raya.

A new dynasty.

Krisṇa Deva Raya is said to have ascended the throne of Vijayanagar in 1509. Under him Vijayanagar attained to the zenith of its greatness and prosperity. He fought the Muslims of the Deccan on equal terms and avenged the wrongs that had been done to his predecessors. He was an able and

Krisṇa Dev Raya's character and personality.

accomplished monarch. Paes who saw him with his own eyes thus describes him:

"The king is of medium height, and of fair complexion and good figure, rather fat than thin; he has on his face signs of small-pox. He is the most feared and perfect king that could possibly be, cheerful of disposition and very merry; he is one that seeks to honour foreigners, and receives them kindly, asking about all their affairs whatever their condition may be. He is a great ruler and a man of much justice, but subject to sudden fits of rage . . . ."

The history of this period is a record of bloody wars. There is no ruler among the sovereigns of the Deccan, both Hindu and Muslim, worthy of comparison with Kriṣṇa Deva Raya. Although a Vaiṣṇava himself, he granted the fullest liberty of worship to his subjects. He was very kind and hospitable to foreigners, who speak highly of his liberality, his genial appearance, and his elevated culture. He was a brilliant conversationalist, and the inscriptions show that he was a great patron of Sanskrit, and Telugu literature. His court was adorned by eight celebrated poets, who were known as *aṣṭa diggaja*. He was not wanting in military prowess and gave proof of his organising capacity and valour in the wars he waged against his enemies. A fearless and renowned captain of war, Kriṣṇa Deva Raya was a man of charitable disposition, and he made numerous gifts to temples and Brahmans. All things considered, he was one of the most remarkable rulers that have appeared in Southern India.

Kriṣṇa Deva Raya's conquests extended far and wide. He defeated the Raya of Orissa and married a

Wars and Conquests.

princess of the royal house. But his most important achievement was the defeat of Adil Shah of Bijapur in 1520. The Muslim camp was sacked, and enormous booty fell into the hands of the Hindus. Adil Shah's prestige was so completely shattered that for a time he ceased to think of further conquest in the south, and concentrated his attention on organising his resources for a fresh and more determined struggle. The Hindus behaved so haughtily in the hour of victory that their conduct gave terrible offence to the Muslim powers and made them the objects of universal hatred in all Muslim circles in the Deccan.

The extent of the empire.

The conquests of Krisṇa Deva Raya considerably enlarged the extent of the empire. It extended over the area which is now covered by the Madras Presidency, the Mysore and certain other states of the Deccan. It reached to Cuttack in the east and Salsette in the west, and towards the south it touched the extreme border of the peninsula. The expansion of the empire and its great resources were a matter of supreme anxiety to the Muslim rulers of the Deccan, who always kept themselves in a state of readiness for war, and left no stone unturned to reduce its power or lower its prestige.

The tide turns.

After Krisṇa Deva Raya's death a period of decline set in. The new ruler Achyut Deva, who was a brother of the late king, was an incompetent man who found it difficult to guard the state against his jealous neighbours. The Sultan of Bijapur seized the forts of Raichur and Mudgal and thus humiliated the Raya. Achyut died in 1541 and was succeeded by Sadāshiva

Raya, the son of a deceased brother of his, but since the latter was merely a figurehead all real power was in the hands of Ram Rājā Saluva, son of Kriṣṇa Deva Raya's minister Saluva Timma. Rama Rājā was a capable man, but his pride and arrogance gave great offence to his allies and opponents alike. In 1543, with the help of Ahmadnagar and Golkunda, he declared war upon Bijapur, but it was saved by the diplomacy of Ali Adil Shah's minister Asad Khan who detached the Raya from the coalition and made peace with Burhān. But a fresh shuffle of cards followed, when in 1557 Bijapur, Golkunda, and Vijayanagar combined to attack Ahmadnagar. The whole country was laid waste by the Hindus and Firishta writes:

> " The infidels of Vijayanagar, who for many years had been wishing such an event, left no cruelty unpractised; they insulted the honour of the Musalman women, destroyed the mosques, and did not even respect the Qurān "

This atrocious conduct of the Hindus outraged Muslim sentiment and alienated their allies. They determined to destroy the Hindu state, and giving up all their differences formed a grand alliance against Vijayanagar. In 1564 Bijapur, Ahmadnagar, Golkunda and Bidar combined but Berar remained outside the coalition.

Battle of Talikota, 1565.

The allies began their southward march on December 25, 1564 and met near the town of Talikota on the bank of the Kriṣṇā. The haughty Raya treated the allied preparations with indifference. He used scornful language towards their ambassadors and spurned all talk of peace. He sent his youngest brother with 20,000



Ruins of Vijayanagar.

horse, 100,000 foot, and 500 elephants to guard the passages of the Krisṇā at all points, and despatched a brother with another force. The remaining troops he kept under his command and marched to the field of battle. The allies too mustered strong to engage in a death grapple with the enemy. The battle began. At first victory seemed to lie with the Hindus, but the tide turned when the artillery wing of the allied army charged them with bags filled with copper coins, and in a short time 5,000 Hindus were slain. This was followed by a fierce cavalry charge. Ram Raja was captured and beheaded by Husain Nazim Shah with the exclamation, 'Now I am avenged of thee. Let God do what He will to me.' The army was instantly seized with panic. The battle ended in a complete rout for the Hindus. About ten thousand were slain and enormous booty fell into the hands of the enemy. Then the allies proceeded towards the city of Vijayanagar which was thoroughly sacked. Its vast wealth was seized and its population was destroyed. No words can describe the horrors and misery which the people of Vijayanagar had to suffer at the hands of the Muslims.

The scene is described by Sewell in these words:—

"The third day saw the beginning of the end. The victorious Musalmans had halted on the field of battle for rest and refreshment, but now they had reached the capital, and from that time forward for a space of five months Vijayanagar knew no rest. The enemy had come to destroy, and they carried out their objects relentlessly. They slaughtered the people without mercy; broke down the temples and palaces and wreaked such savage vengeance on the abode of the kings, that with the

exception of a few great stone-built temples and walls, nothing now remains, but a heap of ruins to mark the spot where once stately buildings stood. They demolished the statues, and even succeeded in breaking the limbs of the huge Narsinha monolith. Nothing seemed to escape them. They broke up the pavilions standing on the huge platform from which the kings used to watch the festivals and overthrew all the carved work. They lit huge fires in the magnificently decorated buildings forming the temple of Vitthalasswami near the river, and smashed its exquisite stone sculptures. With fire and sword, with crow-bars and axes, they carried on day after day their work of destruction. Never perhaps in the history of the world has such havoc been wrought, and wrought so suddenly, on so splendid a city; teeming with a wealthy and industrious population in the full plenitude of prosperity one day, and on the next, seized, pillaged, and reduced to ruins, amid scenes of savage massacre and horrors beggaring description."

The battle of Talikota is one of the most decisive battles in Indian history. It sealed the fate of the great Hindu Empire of the South. Its fall was followed by anarchy and misrule, and the Muslims who were elated at the ruin of their formidable rival soon began to lose their strength and vigour. The fear of Vijayanagar was to them a blessing in disguise. It had kept them alert and active. But as soon as this fear vanished, they quarrelled among themselves, and thus fell an easy prey to the ambitious Mughal Emperors of the north.

Effect of the battle of Talikota.

After the fall of Rama Raja his brother Tirūmala exercised sovereignty in Sadasiva's name, but about the year 1570 he usurped the throne, and laid the foundations of new dynasty. Tirūmala's second son, Ranga II, was succeeded on the throne by Venkata I about 1586. He was the most remarkable prince of the dynasty, a man of ability and character, who extended his patronage to poets and learned men. The successors of Venkata were powerless to reserve intact the small dominion they had inherited from him, and under them the dynasty gradually dwindled into insignificance. The Muslim seized much of the territory of the empire, and the Naiks of Madura and Tanjore built principalities for themselves out of its fragments.

A new dynasty.

The empire was a vast feudal organisation, and the king was the apex of the whole system. He was assisted by a council composed of ministers, provincial governors, military commanders, men of the priestly class and poets. But the government was highly centralised and the king a perfect autocrat. His authority was unlimited. He looked after the civil administration and directed the military affairs of the empire, and acted as judge in cases that were submitted to him for decision. The principal officers of the state were the prime-minister, the chief treasurer, the keeper of the royal jewels, the prefect of the police, who were assisted by a number of lesser officials. The prime-minister was the king's chief adviser on all important questions. The prefect of the police was responsible for maintaining order in the city. The kings of Vijayanagar maintained a splendid court on which they spent huge sums

Administration.

cf money. It was attended by nobles, learned priests, astrologers, and musicians, and on festive occasions fire-works were displayed and various other entertainments were provided by the state.

There was a well-regulated system of local government. The empire was divided into more than 200 provinces, subdivided into *Nadus* or *Kottams*, which were again subdivided into small groups of villages and towns. Each province was held by a viceroy, who either belonged to the royal family or was a powerful noble of the state. The province was merely a replica of the empire. The viceroy kept his own army, held his own court, and practically acted as a despot within his jurisdiction. But he had to render account of his steward-ship to the emperor, and in time of war he was liable to render military service. Though the tenure of the provincial governors was uncertain, they seem to have thoroughly enjoyed their time, while they were in office.

The system of local government extended to the villages. The village was, as it had been from time immemorial, the unit of administration. The village moot managed its own affairs through its hereditary officers, called the Ayagars. Some of them decided petty disputes, collected revenues, and enforced law and order. The village communities served a great purpose. They kept the imperial government in touch with the people.

The kings of Vijayanagar enjoyed a large income. The main source was the land revenue. The Portuguese chronicler Nuniz tells us that the captains held land from the king, and they made it over to husbandmen who paid nine-tenths of their produce to their lords, who in their turn paid one-half to the king. This seems to be an exaggeration, for the peasantry could not live

on barely one-tenth of the produce of their labour. Besides the land tax the state levied a large number of cesses which considerably augmented its income. Even prostitutes were taxed, and the large income from this source was spent on maintaining a police force which was attached to the prefect of the city. The peasant was often rack-rented and heavily assessed, and the tax-collectors dealt with him harshly.

The military organisation was also based on a feudal basis. Besides the king's personal troops, the provincial governors supplied their quota in time of war, and were required to give every kind of assistance. There is a difference of opinion among historians regarding the total numerical strength of the Vijayanagar armies. One authority writes that in 1520 Kriṣṇa Deva Raya had at his disposal a huge army consisting of 703,660 foot, 32,600 horse and 551 elephants and a large number of sappers and camp followers. These figures are considerably over-estimated, and it is highly improbable that the army of the Raya should have been so large. The army was organised like other Hindu armies of the middle ages. It consisted of elephants, cavalry, and infantry, but in fighting strength it was inferior to the Muslim armies of the north. They were not properly organised and disciplined. Much reliance was placed upon elephants and these were powerless against skilled archers and well-trained Muslim cavalry leaders.

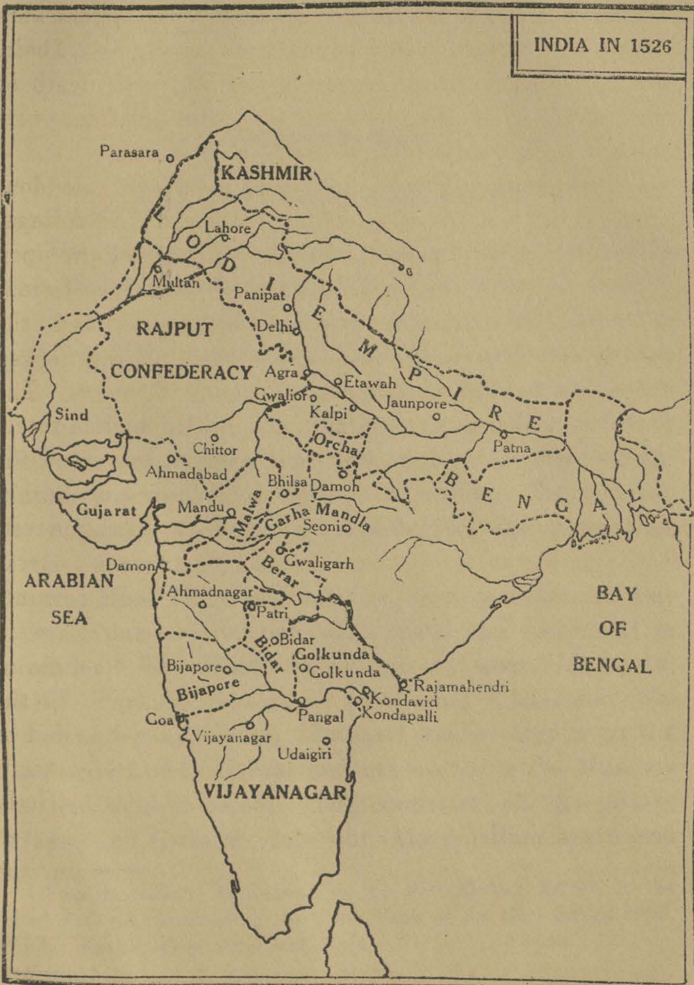
Justice was administered in a rough and ready fashion according to the discretion of the authorities. Petitions could be made to the King or to the prime-minister. Justice in civil cases was dispensed according to the principles of Hindu Law and local usage.

The criminal law was harsh and barbarous. Fines were levied and torture was frequently resorted to. Theft, adultery, and treason were punished with death or mutilation. The members of the priestly order were exempt from capital punishment.

Social condition.

There was a great contrast between the splendour of the court and the squalor and poverty of the cottage. Foreign visitors dwell at length upon the magnificence of royal processions and festivals at the capital and the wealth and luxury of the nobles. Duelling was looked upon as a recognised method of settling disputes. The practice of *Sati* was in vogue, and the Brahmanas freely commended this kind of self-immolation. But the position of women at the capital indicates a highly satisfactory state of affairs. There were women wrestlers, astrologers, soothsayers, and a staff of women clerks was employed within the palace gates to keep accounts of the royal household. This shows that women were fairly well educated and experienced in the business of the state. Great laxity seems to have prevailed in the matter of diet. Though the Brahmanas never killed or ate any living thing, the people used nearly all kinds of meat. The flesh of oxen and cows was strictly prohibited, and even the kings scrupulously observed this rule. Every animal had to be sold alive in the markets.

Brahmanas were held in high esteem. They were, according to Nuniz, honest men, very good at accounts, talented, well-formed but incapable of doing hard work. Bloody sacrifices were common. The wealth of the capital fostered luxury which brought in its train numerous vices.



INDIA IN 1526
Parasara
KASHMIR
LODI EMPIRE
Lahore
Multan
Panipat
Delhi
RAJPUT
CONFEDERACY
Agra
Etawah
Gwalior
Kalpi
Jaunpore
Sind
Chittor
Orcha
Patna
Ahmadabad
Bhilsa
Damoh
BENGAL
Gujarat
Mandu
Malwa
Garha Mandla
Seoni
Gwaligarh
Damon
Berar
ARABIAN
SEA
Ahmadnagar
Patri
BAY
OF
BENGAL
Bidar
Golkunda
Bijapore
Rajamahendri
Kondavid
Goa
Pangal
Kondapalli
Vijayanagar
Udaigiri
VIJAYANAGAR

CHAPTER XXV

THE SAIYYADS AND LODIS

Khizr Khan, 1414—21 A.D.

The political confusion that prevailed at Delhi after Timur's invasion enabled Khizr Khan to acquire more power, and in 1414 he overpowered Daulat Khan and took possession of the capital. The most important problem before him was how to establish order in the Doab and in those provinces which still acknowledged the suzerainty of Delhi. His Wazir Taj-ul-mulk marched into the district of Katehar in 1414 and ravaged the country.

Rai Hara Singh fled without offering resistance, but he was pursued by the royal forces and compelled to surrender. The Hindu Zamindars of Khor,[1] Kampila, Sakīt,[2] Parham, Gwalior, Seori and Chandwar submitted and paid tribute. Jalesar[3] was wrested from the Hindu chief of Chandwar and made over to the Muslims who had held it before. The countries of the Doab, Biyana, and Gwalior broke out into rebellion again and

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1 Khor is modern Shamsabad in the Farrukhabad district in the United Provinces situated on the south bank of the Buri Ganga river, 18 miles north-west of Fatehgarh town.

Farrukhabad Distt. Gaz., pp. 123-124.

2 Sakit lies between Kampila and Rapari, 12 miles south-east of Etah town. It was at Badoli in this *pargana* that Bahlol Lodi died on his return from an expedition against Gwalior.

3 Jalesar is 38 miles east of Muttra in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.

again, but order was restored, and the chiefs were compelled to acknowledge the authority of Delhi.

Having restored order in the Doab, Khizr Khan turned his attention to the affairs of the northern frontier. The rebellion of the Turk-bacchas at Sarhind was put down. Trouble broke out afresh in the Doab, but the leading Zamindars who stirred up strife were subdued. The Mewatis were also suppressed. The Sultan himself marched against the chiefs of Gwalior and Etawah who were reduced to obedience. On his return to Delhi Khizr Khan fell ill and died on May 20, 1421.

Khizr Khan lived like a true Saiyyad. He never shed blood wantonly nor did he ever sanction an atrocious crime either to increase his own power or to wreak vengeance upon his enemies. If there was little administrative reform, the fault was not his; the disorders of the time gave him no rest, and all his life he was engaged in preserving the authority of the state in those parts where it still existed. Firishta passes a well deserved eulogy upon him when he says: "Khizr Khan was a great and wise king and true to his word; his subjects loved him with a grateful affection so that great and small, master and servant, sat and mourned for him in black raiment till the third day, when they laid aside their mourning garments, and raised his son Mubarak Shah to the throne."

Mubarak Shah, 1421—34 A.D.

Khizr Khan was succeeded by his son Mubarak who won the favour of the nobles by confirming them in their possessions. The most remarkable thing about the history of this period is the widespread anarchy that prevailed in the country. As before,

the Zamindars of the Doab revolted again, and the Sultan marched into Katehar in 1423 to enforce the payment of revenue. The Râthor Rajputs of Kampila and Etawah were subdued next, and Rai, Sarwar's son, offered fealty and paid the arrears of tribute.

The most important rebellions of the reign were two—of Jasrath Khokhar in 1428 and of Paulad Turkbaccha near Sarhind. The Khokhar chieftain suffered a severe defeat and fled into the mountains to seek refuge. Paulad was more defiant; he offered a stubborn resistance and remained at bay for more than a year. It was after persistent and prolonged fighting that he was defeated and slain in November, 1433.

In order to make the administration more efficient the Sultan made certain changes in the distribution of the highest offices in the state. This gave offence to certain nobles who conspired to take his life. When the Sultan went to Mubarakabad, a new town which he had founded, to watch the progress of constructions on the 20th February, 1434, he was struck with a sword by the conspirators so that he instantaneously fell dead on the ground.

Mubarak was a kind and merciful king. The contemporary chronicler records his verdict with touching brevity in these words: 'A clement and generous sovereign, full of excellent qualities.'

Bahlol Lodi seizes the throne

Mubarak was succeeded by a series of weak rulers who found it impossible to cope with the increasing disorders of the time. When Alauddin Alam Shah came to the throne in 1445, he transferred his court to Badaon, leaving the capital to be seized by any masterful rival or party leader. Bahlol,

the governor of Lahore and Sarhind, availed himself of this opportunity and assumed sovereignty. Alam Shah's name was removed from the Khu ba, and Bahlol was publicly proclaimed King of Delhi. Alam Shah continued to live at Badaon where he died in 1478. Such was the end of the short-lived Saiyyad dynasty.

Bahlol consolidates his power.

Having obtained the throne Bahlol proceeded with studied caution and feigned humility to secure his minister's confidence. At first he treated him with great respect but soon grew jealous of his power and influence. In order to remove him from his path Bahlol had him arrested and thrown into prison.

Though Bahlol's name was proclaimed in the Khubta, there were many malcontents who did not recognise his title to the throne. When the Sultan left for Sarhind to organise the North-West Provinces, they invited Mahmud Shah Sharqi to advance upon the capital. Mahmud marched at the head of a large army and laid siege to Delhi. On hearing of this disaster Pahlol at once turned back and Mahmud withdrew to Jaunpur.

Reduces the provinces.

This victory over the Sharqi king made a profound impression upon friends and foes alike. At home, it strengthened his position and silenced the malicious detractors of the new dynasty; abroad, it frightened into submission several provincial fief-holders and chieftains who had enjoyed varying degrees of local autonomy. The Sultan proceeded towards Mewat and received the willing homage of Ahmad Khan whom he deprived of seven parganas. The governor of Sambhal, who had taken part in the late war against the Sultan, was

treated indulgently in spite of treason and the only penalty inflicted upon him was the loss of seven parganas. At Kol Īsā Khan was allowed to keep his possessions intact, and similar treatment was accorded to Mubarak Khan, the governor of Sakit, and Raja Pratap Singh who was confirmed in his possession of the districts of Mainpuri and Bhogaon. Etawah, Chandwar, and other districts of the Doab, which had caused so much trouble during the late regime, were also settled and made to acknowledge the authority of Delhi.

The rebellious governors of the Doab were subdued but Bahlol was not yet free from danger. His most formidable enemy was the King of Jaunpur. At the instigation of his wife Mahmud Shah Sharqi made another attempt to seize Delhi, but peace was made through the mediation of certain nobles and the *status quo* was restored.

War against Jaunpur.

But the terms of the treaty were soon violated, and war with Jaunpur became a serious affair when Husain Shah succeeded to the Sharqi throne. Husain was a ruler of great ability and courage; he was led by his courtiers, to think that Bahlol was a usurper and a plebeian by birth, and that he himself had a valid title to the throne. He crossed the Jamna but after some petty skirmishes in which the Jaunpur forces had the advantage, a truce was concluded, and the river Ganges was fixed as the boundary between the two kingdoms. Husain retreated to Jaunpur leaving his camp and baggage behind.

Bahlol soon broke the treaty and attacked the Jaunpur army on its return march. He seized Husain's baggage and captured his wife Malika Jahan. The

Sultan treated his exalted captive with every mark of respect and escorted her back with his Khwaja Sara to Jaunpur. War broke out again, and Husain was defeated in a battle near the Kalinadi by the Delhi forces. Bahlol marched to Jaunpur and obtained possession of it. Husain made another attempt to recover his kingdom but he was defeated and expelled from Jaunpur. As the Sultan had little faith in the loyalty of the Afghan barons, he made over Jaunpur to his son Bārbak Shah.

The conquest of Jaunpur considerably strengthened the hands of Bahlol, and he marched against the chiefs of Kalpi, Dholpur, Bari, and Alapur, who offered their submission.[4] An expedition was sent to chastise the rebellious chief of Gwalior who was subdued and made to pay tribute. On his return from the expedition the Sultan was attacked by fever and after a short illness died in 1488.

Bahlol's achievement.

As the founder of a new dynasty and the restorer of the waning prestige of the Delhi monarchy, Bahlol deserves a high place in history. In personal character he was far superior to his immediate predecessor; brave, generous, humane, and honest, he was devoted to his religion and followed the letter of the law with the strictest fidelity. He was singularly free from ostentation; he never sat upon the throne bedecked with jewels and diamonds in gorgeous robes like other mediæval rulers, and used to say that it was enough for him that

4 Kalpi is a city in the Jalaun district in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. Dholpur is a state between Agra and Gwalior. Bari is a town in the Dholpur State 19 miles west of Dholpur. Alapur is in the Gwalior State near Morena.

the world knew him to be a king without any display of royal splendour on his part. He was kind to the poor and no beggar ever turned away disappointed from his gate. Though not a man of learning himself, he valued the society of learned men and extended his patronage to them. His love of justice was so great that he used to hear personally the petitions of his subjects and grant redress. He kept no private treasure and ungrudgingly distributed the spoils of war among his troops.

Sikandar's accession to the throne.

After Bahlol's death his son Nizam Khan was elevated to the throne under the title of Sikandar Shah by the Amirs and nobles, though not without a dissentient vote. While the question of succession was being mooted by the principal nobles and officers of state, the name of Bārbak Shah was suggested, but, as he was far away, the proposal was rejected, and after some heated discussion among the nobles, the choice fell upon Nizam Khan mainly through the help of Khan-i-Jahan and Khan-i-Khanan Farmuli.

War with Jaunpur.

Sikandar addressed himself to the task of organising the government with great energy and vigour. The first to feel the force of his arms was his brother Bārbak Shah who had assumed the title of king. He was defeated and taken prisoner and the country was entrusted to the Afghan nobles.

The Zamindars of Jaunpur sent word to Husain Sharqi to make once more a bold bid for his ancestral dominions. At the head of a large army he marched to the field of battle, but he was defeated near Benares

and his army was put to flight. Husain Shah fled towards Lakhnauti where he passed the remainder of his life in obscurity. With his defeat the independent Kingdom of Jaunpur ceased to exist. The whole country was easily subdued and the Sultan appointed his own officers to carry on the government.

Sikandar next turned his attention to the Afghan chiefs who held large Jagīrs. The accounts of some of the leading Afghan officers were inspected by the Sultan, and there were startling disclosures. This policy greatly offended them because they looked upon audit and inspection as an encroachment upon their privileges. The king's attempts to suppress them with a high hand led them to form a conspiracy against him, and having finished their nefarious plans, they induced Prince Fatah Khan, the king's brother, to join them. But the prince, realising the dangerous consequences of his conduct, divulged the whole plot to the Sultan who inflicted severe punishments on the wrongdoers.

Against the Afghans.

Experience had impressed upon the Sultan the necessity of making the place where the city of Agra now stands the headquarters of the army so that he might be able to exercise more effective control over the fief-holders of Etawah, Biyana, Kol, Gwalior, and Dholpur. With this object in view, he laid the foundations of a new town on the site where the modern city of Agra now stands in 1504. A splendid town gradually rose upon the chosen spot, and afterwards the Sultan also took up his residence there

Foundation of Agra.

Next year (911 A.H.=1505 A.D.) a violent earthquake occurred at Agra which shook the earth to its foundations and levelled many beautiful buildings and houses to the ground. The chronicler of the reign writes that, 'it was in fact so terrible, that mountains were overturned, and full lofty edifices dashed to the ground: the living thought, the day of judgment was come; and the dead, the day of resurrection.' No such earthquake had occurred before, and the loss of life was appallingly heavy.

Earthquake a Agra.

The remaining years of Sikandar's life were spent in suppressing Rajput revolts and the attempts of provincial governors to establish independent kingdoms of their own. Dholpur, Gwalior and Narwar were subdued, and their chiefs were compelled to pay homage to the Sultan. The prince of Chanderi also submitted and though allowed to retain nominal possession of the city, the administration was entrusted to the leading Afghan officers.

The last year of the reign.

The last expedition was undertaken by the Sultan to secure the fortress of Ranthambhor which was entrusted to a nobleman who held it as a vassal of Delhi. The prince of Gwalior rebelled again. The Sultan put his forces in order, but in the midst of these preparations he fell ill and died on December 1, 1517, and was succeeded by his son Ibrahim Lodi

Sikandar was the ablest ruler of the Lodi dynasty. He kept the Afghan barons in check and strictly enforced his orders. He ordered an examination of the accounts of Afghan governors and fief-holders and

Administration.

punished those who were found guilty of embezzlement. The provincial governors feared him and loyally carried out his orders. The Sultan took special care to protect the interests of the poor. He abolished the corn duties and took steps to encourage agriculture. The roads were cleared of robbers and the Zamindars who had been notorious for their lawless habits were sternly put down. The author of the *Tarikh-i-Daudi* writes of Sikandar's administration:

> "The Sultan daily received an account of the prices of all things and an account of what had happened in the different districts of the Empire. If he perceived the slightest appearance of anything wrong, he caused instant inquiries to be made about it. . . . In his reign, business was carried on in a peaceful, honest, straightforward way. The study of *belles lettres* was not neglected . . . Factory establishments were so encouraged that all the young nobles and soldiers were engaged in useful works . . . All the nobles and soldiers of Sikandar were satisfied: each of his chiefs was appointed to the government of a district, and it was his especial desire to gain the goodwill and affections of the body of the people. For the sake of his officers and troops, he put an end to war and dispute with the other monarchs and nobles of the period, and closed the road to contention and strife. He contented himself with the territory bequeathed him by his father, and passed the whole of his life in the greatest safety and enjoyment, and gained the hearts of high and low."

Sikandar was a man of handsome appearance, fond of chase and well-versed in the accomplishments suited

to men of his rank. He was intensely religious and allowed himself to be guided and dominated by the *ulama* in every detail of government. He persecuted the Hindus and desired to banish idolatry from the land. So great was his zeal for the faith that he once ordered the temples of Mathura to be destroyed, and *sarais* and mosques to be built in their stead. The Hindus were not allowed to bathe at the ghats on the bank of the Jamna, and an order was passed prohibiting barbers from shaving the heads and beards of the Hindus in accordance with their religious custom.

Character of Sikandar.

The Sultan loved justice. He listened to the complaints of the poor himself and tried to redress them. He kept himself informed of everything that happened in his empire. The market was properly controlled and all cases of fraud or deceit were reported to the Sultan.

The Sultan was well-known for his sobriety and wisdom. He never allowed men of dissolute character to come near him. Himself a man of literary tastes, he extended his patronage to learned men and often invited them to his palace to listen to their discourses.

During his lifetime, Sikandar maintained order by his firm policy and held the turbulent barons in check, but after his death when the crown passed to a man who was inferior to him in ability and character, the forces which he had controlled broke loose and undermined the foundations of the empire.

The character of the Afghan government changed under Ibrahim. He was a man of headstrong and irritable temper, who by his insolence and hauteur alienated the sympathies of the Afghan nobles. The Afghans

The character of the Afghan government.

looked upon their king as a comrade and not as master and willingly accorded to him the honours of a feudal superior. Men of the Lohani, Farmuli, and Lodi tribes held important offices in the state. They had always been turbulent and factious; and their position and influence had cnabled them to form conspiracies against the crown. Their loyalty to their king fluctuated according to the strength or weakness of the latter. Sikandar had kept them under firm control and severely punished them when they flouted his authority. But when Ibrahim attempted to put down their individualistic tendencies with a high hand in order to make his government strong and efficient, they protested and offered resistance. As Erskine observes, the principal fief-holders looked upon their Jagīrs 'as their own of right, and purchased by their swords rather than as due to any bounty or liberality on the part of the sovereign.' Ibrahim was confronted with a difficult situation. The territory of the empire had increased in extent; the feudal aristocracy had become ungovernable, and the elements of discontent which had accumulated for years silently beneath the surface began to assert themselves. The Hindus, dissatisfied with Sikandar's policy of religious persecution, heartily hated the alien government which offended against their most cherished prejudices. The problem before Ibrahim was somewhat similar to that which confronted the Tudors in England towards the close of the fifteenth century. But he lacked that tact, foresight, and strength of will which enabled Henry VII to put down with a high hand the overweening feudal aristocracy which tended to encroach upon the royal domain. His drastic measures provoked the resentment

of the half-loyal nobility and paved the way for the disruption of the Afghan empire. But Ibrahim is not wholly to blame. The break-up of the empire was bound to come sooner or later, for even if Ibrahim had kept the nobles attached to himself, they would have tried to set up small principalities for themselves, and reduced him to the position of a titular king, a mere figurehead in the midst of warring factions and cliques.

Cheapness of prices.

Though Ibrahim was jealous of the influence of the barons and tried to crush them with a high hand, he never neglected the interests of the people. During his reign, the crops were abundant and the prices of all articles of ordinary use were incredibly low. The Sultan took grain in payment of rent and all the fief-holders and nobles were asked to accept payments in kind. No scarcity of grain was ever felt, and the author of the *Tarikh-i-Daudi* writes that a respectable man's services could be obtained for five *tankās* a month and a man could travel from Delhi to Agra for one Bahloli which was sufficient to maintain himself, his horse, and his small escort during the journey.

Prince Jalal's revolt.

As has been said above, Ibrahim had by his indiscriminate severity alienated the sympathies of the Lodi Amirs, who conspired soon after his accession to place his brother Prince Jalal upon the throne of Jaunpur. In pursuance of this plan, the prince marched from Kalpi and assumed charge of the government of Jaunpur. But this arrangement was highly disapproved by Khan-Jahan Lodi, one of the most high-minded Amirs of Sikandar. He sharply reprimanded the nobles for

their impolitic conduct, and pointed out the dangers of a dual sovereignty to the empire. The Afghan nobles acknowledged their mistake, and tried to persuade Prince Jalal to withdraw from Jaunpur, but he refused to do so. Negotiations having failed, Ibrahim issued a *farman* in which he ordered the Amirs not to pay any heed to Jalal's authority and threatened them with severe punishments, if they failed to comply with the royal mandate. The more influential among the Amirs were conciliated by gifts and presents and were detached from Prince Jalal. Deprived of this support, he allied himself with the Zamindars and with their help improved the condition of his army. Ibrahim confined all his brothers in the fort of Hansi, and himself marched against Jalal whose strength was considerably diminished by the desertion of Azam Humayun, his principal supporter. Kalpi was besieged; the contest was carried on with great vigour for some time and the fort was dismantled. Jalal fled towards Agra where the governor opened negotiations with him and offered him the undisturbed possession of Kalpī, if he waived all claims to sovereignty. When Ibrahim came to know of this treaty which was concluded without his consent, he disapproved of it and issued orders for the assassination of the rebellious prince. Jalal fled to the Raja of Gwalior for protection.

Having set the affairs of the capital in order, Ibrahim sent his forces to reduce the fort of Gwalior. Jalal fled towards Malwa but he was captured by the Zamindars of Gondwana who sent him in chains to Ibrahim. The Prince was conveyed to Hansi, but on his way to that abode of misery he was assassinated by the Sultan's orders.

The Sultan dismissed Azam Humayun from command and deprived his son Islam Khan of the governorship of Kara-Manikpur. His disgrace alarmed the other nobles, who joined his banner and incited him to raise the standard of rebellion. So great was the discontent caused by Ibrahim's policy that in a short time the rebels collected a large army which consisted of 40,000 cavalry, 500 elephants and a large body of infantry, while the royal forces numbered only 50,000. A desperate fight raged between the royalists and the rebels of which a graphic account is given by the author of the *Makhzan-i-Afghani*:

Against Azam Humayun.

> "Dead bodies, heap upon heap, covered the field; and the number of heads lying upon the ground is beyond the reach of recollection. Streams of blood ran over the plain; and whenever for a length of time, a fierce battle took place in Hindustan, the old men always observed that with this battle no other one was comparable; brothers fighting against brothers, fathers against sons, inflamed by mutual shame and innate bravery; bows and arrows were laid aside, and the carnage carried on with daggers, swords, knives and javelins."

At last, Islam Khan lay dead on the field of battle; Said Khan was captured, and the rebels were defeated with heavy losses.

Ibrahim now tried to destroy the feudal chieftains in his empire in order to strengthen his position, but the attempt recoiled on himself and led to his ruin. The cruel treatment he meted out to them has already been mentioned. The veteran Mian Bhuā had fallen a victim

Ibrahim and the Afghan barons.

to his wrath, and Azam Humayun had been treacherously assassinated in prison. Even the greatest barons trembled for their safety, and Dariya Khan, Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, and Husain Khan Farmuli, fearing lest a similar fate should overtake them, broke out into open rebellion. Husain Khan Farmuli was assassinated in his bed by some holy men of Chanderi, and his tragic death made the Afghan nobles bitterly hostile to the Sultan and convinced them of his perfidious designs. Dariya Khan's son, Bahadur Khan, assumed the title of Muhammad Shah, struck coins in his name, and collected a large force with which he successfully resisted the attempts of the Sultan to crush him. The baronial discontent reached its climax when Ibrahim cruelly treated the son of Daulat Khan Lodi, the governor of the Punjab. The latter was summoned to court, but he excused himself on the ground that he would come later with the treasure of the state, and sent his son Dilāwar Khan to avert the wrath of the Sultan. He was taken to the prison where he was shown the victims of royal caprice suspended from the walls. To the young Afghan who trembled with fear at this awful spectacle, the Sultan observed: "Have you seen the condition of those who have disobeyed me?" Dilāwar Khan, who understood the warning these ominous words conveyed, bowed his head in profound submission and quietly escaped to his father to whom he communicated all that he had seen at the capital. Alarmed for his safety, Daulat Khan addressed through his son Dilāwar Khan an invitation to Babar, the ruler of Kabul, to invade Hindustan. The story of Babar's conquest of Hindustan will be related in another chapter.

CHAPTER XXVI

SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN MEDIAEVAL INDIA

The Islamic State.

The Muslim state was a theocracy. Its real head was God and kings were merely His vicegerents whose duty was to execute the Divine Will. In such a state everything was subordinated to religion and kings and their officers were bound by solemn oaths to further the cause of the true faith. The non-Muslims called the *Zimmis* occupied an inferior position in the state and had to pay the *Jeziya* as the price of protection enjoyed by them. It was the duty of an ideal Muslim state to banish idolatry from the land, to extinguish dissent and to convert the infidel population to Islam. The '*Ulamā* (the learned in the law) naturally acquired a considerable influence in such a state, and advised kings to approximate as far as possible to the ideal set forth in the Holy Book. Those who acted according to their wishes were looked upon as successful rulers, while those who refused to conform to their ideal received scant praise at their hands. Among the sultans of Hindustan, Alauddin, who was a typical Turkish despot, struck a new line. He treated the orthodox community with little regard, and declared without fear that he would do what was good for the state whether it met with the approval of the '*Ulamā* or not. Muslim opinion made no protest against this new political theory because the situation required a strong and warlike man to deal wlth the Mughals who were pouring into **India**

again and again in large numbers. Muhammad Tughluq went a step farther. He was a rationalist who applied the test of reason to time-honoured theological beliefs. The *'Ulamā* declared war against him and fostered strife in the country to such an extent that in the long run Muhammad found himself powerless to curb the spirit of revolt that was rampant throughout the land. With the accession of Firūz Tughluq the pendulum swung into the opposite direction, and the *'Ulamā* once again regained their lost ascendancy. Firūz did nothing without taking a *fal* of the *Quran* and fully shared the superstition which might have been befitting in an average follower of Islam. After the period of anarchy, which followed the death of Firūz, the Lodi Afghans established a settled government. Sikandar, the second ruler of the Lodi dynasty, behaved like a religious fanatic. He did not favour the Hindus and imposed great disabilities upon them. With the fall of the Lodi Empire, a distinct epoch in Indian history came to an end. The secular forces became stronger and shaped the policy of the state to a large extent. On the whole during this period of five hundred years the *'Ulama* enjoyed a great authority and powerful kings and nobles found it hard to go against their wishes.

Effect on the people.

The organization of the Islamic state was not conducive to the growth of self-reliance or initiative in the members of the Muslim community. Every Muslim was a soldier in the cause of the true faith. It was his duty to uphold by force of arms the honour and position of his religion and to advance its interest. The easy acquisition of wealth made the Muslims luxurious and ease-loving. They dreaded the struggle for existence

and looked up to the state for everything. As the status of the subject population was not very high, according to Islamic law, the Muslims became a privileged class and claimed a preferential treatment. The bounty of the state made it unnecessary for them to labour in the fields or to exert themselves in any other manner to earn their livelihood. Service under the government seemed to be the ambition of every Muslim who aspired to success in life. Thousands of them lived a life of indolence, made possible by the fiefs which had been granted to them or which had been bequeathed to them by their ancestors. The other section of the population, namely, the Hindus counted for little. They had no voice in the affairs of the state, and while the Muslims were elevated to high rank and office the Hindus suffered from great disabilities and seldom got an opportunity of developing their talent to its fullest extent.

Social Condition.

The Muslims were the pampered children of the state. Great indulgence was shown to them and their interests were considered before all others. Wine-drinking, gambling and concubinage were common, and nobody felt ashamed of them. Alauddin employed drastic measures to put down wine-drinking and all convivial gatherings among the nobles and officers of the realm. As long as he lived, he enforced his edicts with strictness but soon after his death his son Qutbuddin Mubarakshah gave up all decency and openly lived a life of debauch. The old rules fell into disuse and the king and his courtiers vied with one another in giving a free rein to their lower appetites. Matters improved under Ghiyasuddin Tughluq who lived a pure and simple life, and his son maintained the traditions of his

father. But under Firūz the power of the priestly class increased, and the Muslims lost their old grit and manliness with the result that not a single great victory was obtained by them, and the prestige of the crown was visibly weakened. The faith of Islam gave place to superstition and ignorance, and a number of sects sprang up of which Firūz makes mention in his *Fatūhat-i-Firūzshahi*. Royal edicts were issued to discourage visits by women to the tombs of holy men outside the city, and heavy penalties were laid down for those who were guilty of disobedience.

The Hindus did not enjoy the same privileges in the state as the Muslims. Barani writes that during the reign of Alauddin no Hindu could hold up his head, and in their houses no sign of gold or silver *tankās* or *jītals* was to be seen; and *chowdhris* and *khuts* had not means enough to ride on horseback, to find weapons, to get fine clothes or to indulge in betel. So great was the destitution of these people, writes the same authority, that their wives went to serve in the houses of the Muslims. There was little persecution under the first two Tughluqs, but Firūz revived the orthodox policy. He levied the *Jeziya* upon the Brahmanas, and when they protested against it, he reduced the scale of assessment but retained the tax.

The Hindus, particularly of the Doab, recovered their lost power during the disorders that followed the death of Firūz, but when the government of the country assumed a settled form under the Lodis there was trouble again for them. Sikandar, though a strong ruler, was a bigot by temperament and training. He treated the Hindus harshly, and his intolerance alienated their sympathies.

Ibn Batūtā has given us an interesting account of the social customs and manners of the time. Slavery was common, but the state encouraged the practice of manumission. He admires the hospitality of the Hindus and writes that caste rules were strictly observed. Moral offences were severely punished, and no indulgence was shown even to persons of high rank and noble birth. Wine was not much in use, and the author of the *Masālik-al-absār* writes that the people of India have little taste for wine and content themselves with betel leaves. The law of debt was severe—a fact noted also by Marco Polo, who visited India in the thirteenth century. The creditors resorted to the royal court to seek the king's protection against a defaulting borrower. When the debtor happened to be a big noble, the creditor blocked his way and cried aloud to implore the sultan's help. The debtor in such an awkward situation either made the payment or made a promise to pay the debt on some appointed date. Sometimes the Sultan himself interfered to enforce payments. The practice of *Sati* was in vogue but no woman was allowed to burn herself without the Sultan's permission. Charity was practised on a large scale, and men endowed large *Khanqahs* (charity houses) where food was freely distributed to the poor. The status of women was not very high as is evidenced by Ibn Batūtā's reckless marriages. But the education of women was not unknown in the country and Ibn Batūtā writes that in Hanaur he found thirteen schools for girls and twenty-three for boys—a thing which agreeably surprised him.

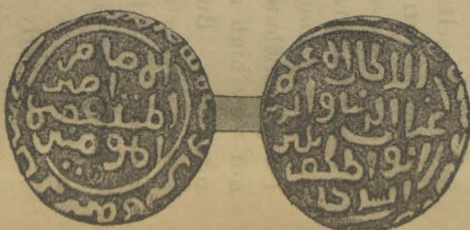
The early Musalman invaders had drained the country's wealth and had done nothing to organise



Iltutmish.



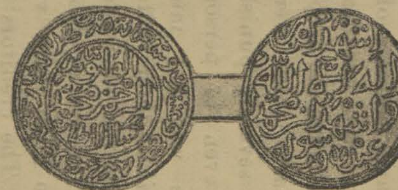
Ala-ud-din Khilji.



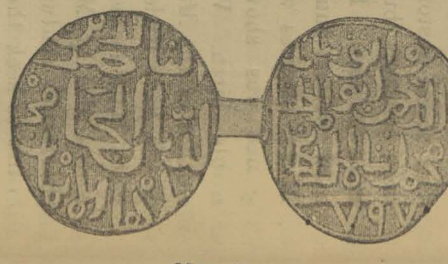
Balban.



Md. Bin Tughluq, Brass and Copper.



Md. Bin Tughluq, Gold.



Md. Shah Bahmani

a settled government. Balban was the first who created those conditions in which trade and commerce flourish. He cleared the neighbourhood of Kampil and Patiālī of robbers and highwaymen so that cultivation throve, and merchants could safely take their goods from one place to another. Alauddin was a daring political economist. He introduced tariff laws which are a monument of mediæval autocracy. Prices of the necessaries of life became cheap and the income of the state was increased by fresh taxation and the prize-money brought by the Sultan from the Deccan. In the time of Muhammad Tughluq there was a dire famine which lasted for several years and the Sultan devised a system of relief without much success. The experiment of a token currency was tried, but it was a failure and the people naturally felt reluctant to part with their gold and silver in exchange for the Sultan's copper. Industry received much encouragement from Muhammad Tughluq. There was a state workshop in which four hundred silk-weavers were employed and fabrics of all kinds were prepared. There were also five hundred manufacturers of golden tissues in the service of the Sultan, who wove gold brocades for the royal household and the nobility. Trade was carried on with foreign countries and Marco Polo and Ibn Batūtā both speak of foreign merchants who visited the country. Broach and Calicut were famous centres of trade where traders from all parts of the world came to buy goods.

Economic Condition.

From 1351 to 1388 economic prosperity remained at a high level. Firūz provided irrigation facilities to the agriculturists which increased the revenue of the empire to six crores and 85 lakhs of *tankās*. Prices

were so cheap that men could go from one place to another for a small sum of money. A man going from Delhi to Firūzabad had to pay four silver *jītals* for a carriage, six for a mule, twelve for a horse, and half a *tankā* for a palanquin. Coolies could be had very cheap and Barani writes that they made good incomes. Timūr's invasion dislocated all commerce and industry, and the country did not recover from anarchy until the accession of Bahlol. During the reigns of Bahlol and Sikandar the prices were low and it was not difficult to procure easily the means of subsistence.

Art.

Art flourished remarkably in the early middle ages. The debt of Indo-Moslem art to India is a matter of controversy. There are some who hold that it is a variety of Islamic art, while others like Havell maintain that it is a modified form of Hindu art. The truth lies midway between these two extreme views. There is no doubt that Islamic art was considerably modified by Hindu master-builders and architects, but it is wrong to suppose that it had no ideals of its own. By the time the Muslim power was established in India, the Muslims had acquired a fine taste for buildings and had developed their own notions about architecture. The conditions in which the Indo-Moslem art grew up made it necessary that there should be a fusion of the two ideals. Hinduism recommended idolatry while Islam forbade it; Hinduism favoured decoration and gorgeousness while Islam enjoined puritanical simplicity. These different ideals, so strangely in contrast with each other, produced by their junction a new kind of art which for the sake of convenience has been called the Indo-Moslem art. Gradually as the Hindu master-builders

and craftsmen began to express Islamic ideas in the shape of brick and stone, the process of amalgamation set in. Both learnt from each other, and though the Muslim's handling of ornament was not so exquisite, he derived the fullest advantage from the new ideas and materials supplied to him by the Indian conquest. Sir John Marshall describes with clearness the process of fusion in these words:—

> "Thus, a characteristic feature of many Hindu temples as well as of almost every Muslim mosque —a feature derived from the traditional dwelling house of the East and as familiar in India as in other parts of Asia—was the open court encompassed by chambers or colonnades, and such temples as were built on this plan naturally lent themselves to conversion into mosques and would be the first to be adopted for that purpose by the conquerors. Again, a fundamental characteristic that supplied a common link between the two styles was the fact that both Islamic and Hindu art were inherently decorative. Ornament was as vital to the one as to the other; both were dependent on it for their very being."

The Arabs reared no buildings, but they appreciated Hindu culture and admired the skill of the Indian architects and craftsmen. Mahmūd of Ghazni was so struck with the skill of Hindu architects that he carried to Ghazni thousands of masons and artisans whom he employed in building the famous mosque known as the 'celestial bride.' He was followed by other warriors of Islam like Muhammad of Ghor and his gallant slaves Qutb-ud-din and Iltutmish who

accomplished the conquest of Northern India during the years 1193—1236 A.D. The principal monuments erected during the reigns of Qutb-ud-din and Iltutmish were the mosque at Ajmer, the Qutbi mosque and minar at Delhi and certain buildings at Badāon. Hindu craftsmen were employed to construct these buildings, and the influence of Hindu architecture is still traceable in them. The most striking thing in the Qutbi mosque is the screen of eleven pointed arches of which Fergusson speaks in terms of great admiration. The Qutb Minar was begun by Qutb-ud-din who built the first storey, but it was finally completed by Iltutmish. It was named after the famous saint Qutb-ud-din who is popularly known as Qutb Shah. It is nearly 242 feet high, and is still looked upon as a great work of art. The minar was struck by lightning in the time of Firūz Tughluq who ordered the fourth storey to be dismantled, and replaced by two smaller storeys as is shown by an inscription of the same king. In 1503 the upper storeys were again repaired by Sikandar Lodi. The *adhāī din kā jhonparā* at Ajmer built by Qutb-ud-din was beautified by Iltutmish with a screen which still exists. The story that it was constructed in two and a half days seems to be a myth, for no amount of skill or industry could have reared a building of this kind in such a short time. Probably the name dates from the Maratha times when an annual fair was held there which lasted for two and a half days. Other notable buildings of this period are the *Hauz-i-Shamshi* and the *Shamsi Idgah* built by Iltutmish during his governorship of Badāon (1203—09) and the *Jam-i-masjid* which was built in 1223 twelve years after his accession to the throne.

Under Alauddin Khilji the power of the Sultanate of Delhi increased enormously. Though his time was largely spent in wars, he ordered the construction of several forts, tanks, and palaces. The fort of Siri was built by him near a village of the same name at a distance of two miles to the north-east of Qila Rai Pithaura. The walls of the fort were built of stone and masonry, and its fortifications were extremely strong. The palace of *Hazār Sitūn* (or thousand pillars) was built by Alauddin, and Barani writes that the heads of thousands of Mughals were buried in the foundations and walls of this magnificent building. The Alai Darwaza which was built in 1311 is ' one of the most treasured gems of Islamic architecture '; other notable monuments are the *Hauz Alāī* and the *Hauz-i-Khas* which are so famous in history. The fourteenth century was a period of great stress and storm in the history of the Delhi Sultanate. The Mongols constantly hammered at the gates of Delhi, and the Hindu Rajas defied the authority of the central power. The result of this was that the architecture of the Tughluq period became massive and simple. The most typical building of this style is the tomb of Tughluq Shah which still exists near the old fort of Tughluqabad. Firūz was a magnificent builder, who spent vast sums of money on towns, palaces, mosques, tanks, reservoirs and gardens. Many new buildings were constructed, and old ones were repaired. He founded the city of Firūzabad, the ruins of which still exist near the modern Shahjahanabad and supplied it with abundant water by means of a well-managed canal system. He built two other cities Fatahabad and Hisar Firoza, and laid the foundations of a third called Jaunpur on the bank of the Gomti to

commemorate the name of his illustrious cousin Muhammad Tughluq. He caused two Asokan pillars to be removed to Delhi, one from Tobra in the Ambala district and the other from a village in the Meerut district. The contemporary chronicler Afif has given a highly interesting account of the transfer of these monoliths. The Sultan's interest in buildings was so keen that he never permitted the construction of any building unless its plan was carefully scrutinised by the *Diwan-i-wizārat* and finally approved by him. As Firūz was an orthodox Muslim, the austerity of the new style remained undisturbed, and it was left for the provincial dynasties which came into existence after his death to give an impetus to the development of art.

The kings of Jaunpur were great patrons of art and literature. Their buildings exist to this day, and are fine specimens of the Indo-Muhammadan art. The Atālā masjid, which was completed in the reign of Sultan Ibrahim, the Jam-i-masjid, built under the patronage of Husain Shah, the Lal Darwaza mosque, and the broken facade of the Jahangiri, the Khalis Mukhlis are some of the most remarkable specimens of Indian architecture. Similar interest in art was shown by the Sunni rulers of Gaur who developed a style different from that of Delhi and Jaunpur. The buildings of Gaur are made entirely of brick, and seem to bear traces of the imitation of Hindu temple architecture. The most remarkable buildings are the tomb of Husain Shah, the greater and lesser Golden Mosques, and the Qadam Rasūl built by Sultan Nusarat Shah. The small Golden or Eunuch's Mosque is a solidly constructed building which 'is carved inside and out with beautifully chiselled designs, including the Indian lotus.'

But the most striking of all is the Adīnā Mosque at Pānduā, twenty miles from Gaur, which was built by Sikandar Shah in 1368 A.D.

The most beautiful of all the provincial styles of architecture was that of Gujarat. Before the Muslim conquest, Gujarat was under the influence of Jainism, and naturally when the country passed into the hands of the Muslims, the master-builders whom the Muslims employed to construct their buildings adopted Hindu and Jain designs with necessary modifications to suit the puritanical tastes of Islam. Ahmad Shah was a great builder. He founded the city of Ahmadabad in the first half of the fifteenth century and built mosques and palaces. Numerous buildings were erected during the fifteenth century at Ahmadabad, Cambay, Champānīr and other important places. One of the most beautiful buildings is the mosque of Muhāfiz Khan which was built towards the close of the century. Besides mosques and tombs Gujarat is famous for its step-wells, irrigation works, and public orchards.

Māndū was equally famous for its buildings in the fifteenth century. The massive buildings that exist to this day bear testimony to the power and magnificence of the Sultans of Māndū. Some of the most remarkable buildings are the Jam-i-masjid, the Hindola mahal, the Jahaz mahal, the tomb of Hushang Shah, and the palaces of Baz Bahadur and Rūpmatī.

It was not only in North India that art made progress but in the Deccan also it received encouragement from the Bahmani and Vijayanagar kings. The Bahmani kings founded cities and built mosques and fortresses. The mosques at Gulbargā and Bīdar are noble specimens of Deccan art. Some of the important

buildings constructed by them are the Jam-i-masjid at Gulbargā, built by Persian architects, the Chāndminar at Daulatabad, and the college of Mahmud Gāwān, also built in the Persian style. But the Bahmanids are famous in history for their fortresses, the chief of which are those of Gwaligarh, Narnāla and Māhur in the Ādilabād district which was built as an outpost against the Hindu chiefs of the Satpura ranges. The fortresses of Parendā, Naldurg, and Panhālā were built by them to consolidate their power. At Gulbargā there are two groups of important buildings. One group contains the tombs of Alauddin Hasan Bahman Shah, Muhammad Shah, Muhammad Shah II, and two others of a later date. The other group known collectively as the Haft Gumbad or seven domes contains the tombs of Mujāhid Shah, Dāūd Shah, Ghiyasuddin and his family, and Firūz Shah and his family. All these bear a great resemblance to one another. The city of Bidar was laid out by Ahmad Shah. It has a fort and contains two other buildings of note, the tomb of Ahmad Shah Wali and the Sola mosque which was built in the reign of Muhammad Shah III. The most remarkable architecture is that of Bijapur among the Deccan kingdoms. The tomb of Muhammad Adil Shah, known as the Gol Gumbaz, is a stately edifice scarcely inferior to any other building of the same kind.

The kings of Vijayanagar were in no way behind the Bahmanids in this respect. They had a great enthusiasm for building council chambers, public offices, irrigation works, aqueducts, temples and palaces which were richly decorated. There is evidence to prove that an excellent system of irrigation prevailed throughout the city, and large tanks were built for

the storage of water. Numerous temples were built, the most famous of which was the Vitthala temple described by Fergusson as a most characteristic specimen of the Dravidian style. Sculpture and painting were not unknown, and it appears that artists acquired considerable proficiency in these branches as is shown by the accounts of the Portuguese chroniclers and the Persian envoy Abdur Razzāq.

Literature.

It is impossible to give here an exhaustive account of the various branches of mediæval literature, and all that can be done here is to give a bare summary of the work done by famous writers and scholars. Persian literature flourished remarkably under court patronage. Amir Khusrau, the poet-laureate of the empire under the Khiljis and Tughluqs, was the greatest poet of the time. He wrote copiously, and his numerous works are still read with interest. His contemporary, Mīr Hasan Dehlvī, was also a poet of no mean order. He enjoyed the patronage of Muhammad, the martyr prince, and Sultan Muhammad Tughluq. He composed a *Diwān* and wrote the memoirs of his patron Saint Shaikh Nizām-ud-din Auliā. The works of court historians are too many to mention. The most famous of them are the *Tarikh-i-Firuzshahi* of Ziā-ud-din Barani and Shams-i-Sirāj 'Afīf and the *Tarikh-i-Mubārakshahi* of Yahyā bin 'Abdullah and the works of Afghan historians. Jaunpur was a famous seat of learning in the middle ages, and Ibrahim Shah Sharqi was a generous patron of letters. Several literary, philosophical and theological works were written during his reign.

The Muslim scholars were not wholly unacquainted with Sanskrit. Al Biruni who came to India in the

tenth century was a profound Sanskrit scholar who translated several works on philosophy and astronomy from Sanskrit into Arabic. His *Tarikh-i-Hind* is still a mine of information about Hindu civilisation. In the fourteenth century when Firūz Tughluq captured the fort of Nagarkot, he ordered a work on philosophy, divination and omens to be translated into Persian and named it *Dalayāl-i-Firūzshahi.* Literary activity did not altogether cease under the Lodis. During Sikandar's reign a medical treatise was translated from Sanskrit into Persian.

The Hindus were not behind the Muslim in literary advancement. Though court patronage was denied to them, they continued to produce high-class literature both in Sanskrit and Hindi in centres away from Muslim influence. Rāmānuja wrote his commentaries on the *Brahma Sūtras* in which he expounded the doctrine of *Bhakti.* In the twelfth century Jayadeva wrote his *Gīta Govinda,* a noble specimen of lyrical poetry which describes the love of Krisṇa and Rādhā, their estrangement and final union, and the sports of Krisṇa with the milk-maids of Vraj. The drama flourished in those parts of India where the Muslim power was slow to reach. Some of the dramas worthy of mention are the *Lalitā Vigraharāja Nāṭaka, Harikeli Nāṭaka, Parvati-pariṇaya, Vidagdha Mādhava* and *Lalitā Mādhava.* Regarding legal literature it may be said that some of the best commentaries were written during this period. Works on astronomy were also written, but Hindu scholars paid little attention to history. The only work which has any claim to be called a historical treatise is Kalhaṇa's *Rājataranginī* or 'River of Kings,' which was composed towards the middle of the twelfth century.

A word may be said about the development of vernacular literature during this period. The earliest writers of Hindi are Chandbardai, Jagnayak, the author of *Ālahkhand*, Amir Khusrau, the parrot of Hind, and Baba Gorakhnath who flourished in the fourteenth century. Later the *Bhakti* cult gave a great impetus to the Hindi literature. Kabīr, Nānak, and Mirābai composed their hymns and devotional songs in Hindi, and their contributions greatly enriched the literature of the language. The preachers of the Rādhā Krisṇa cult wrote and sang in Vrajbhāṣā and considerably helped the growth of Hindi literature. In Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and even in the distant South the vernaculars made much progress. In Bengal, a vernacular translation of the Sanskrit Ramayana was prepared by Krittivāsā whose work is 'in fact the Bible of the people of the Gangetic valley.' The Bhāgwat and the Mahābhārata were also translated under the patronage of the state. Nāmadeva, the Maratha saint, largely wrote in Marathi and some of his hymns are still preserved in the Granth Sahib, the bible of the Sikhs. In the South, the earliest works in Tamil and Kanarese were produced by the Jains, but in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries a great impetus was given to literary effort by the Śaiva movement. It was during this period that Sāyana and Mādhava Vidyāraṇya, two brothers, wrote their works which have placed them among the leaders of Sanskrit scholarship. The former wrote his famous commentary on the Vedas, and the latter followed his brother's example by writing several philosophical works The Telugu literature received much encouragement from the kings of Vijayanagar. Krisṇa Deva Raya took a keen interest in letters,

and was himself the author of several works of merit.

Islam brought about a great change in the social and religious outlook of the Indian people. Though for a long time the Hindus and Muslims had kept apart from each other, in course of time it became inevitable that a *rapprochement* should be established between the two peoples. Both sides began to realise that the one could not do without the other. Royal patronage and sympathy won the goodwill of the Hindus and reconciled them to Muslim rule. The futility of war became evident, and thoughtful men on either side began to work to bring about a better understanding, where there had been dissension and discord. The influence of Muslim saints, like Fariduddin Shakarganj of Pākpatan, Nizamuddin Auliā of Delhi and Ghīsūdarāz of the Deccan, tended to lessen the force of prejudice and bigotry. Their teachings were listened to by all classes with respect and in their presence all social and religious differences were forgotten. Devotion to a holy man created a new bond of sympathy which bound together into a close union all those who offered homage to him.

Religious reform —Bhakti cult.

The Muslim doctrine of the unity of the Godhead was not new to the Hindus. But its emphatic assertion in Islam had a great effect on teachers like Nāmadeva, Rāmānand, Kabīr, Chaitanya and Nānak in whom we see a happy blending of Hindu and Muslim influences. He denounced polytheism and idolatry and inveighed against caste. True religion did not consist in meaningless ritual and empty forms but in *Bhakti* or true devotion to God. The *Bhakti* cult made rapid

progress in the hands of the masters who dominated the religious mind of India during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.



Chaitanya Deva.

The first great teacher of *Bhakti* was Rāmānuja who lived in the twelfth century. He preached the worship of Viṣṇu and found fault with Śaṅkara's *advait* doctrine. He taught that individual souls are not essentially one with the Supreme, though they all emanate from Him as sparks from fire, and that the Supreme is not purely abstract purity, but possesses real qualities of goodness and beauty in an infinite degree. Thus he laid stress upon devotion to a *Saguṇa Iśwara* who possesses a number of noble attributes and his teachings appealed to large numbers of men in South India.

Rāmānand who lived in the fourteenth century in Northern India also taught the doctrine of *Bhakti*. He is distinguished from Rāmānuja by his opposition to caste. He preached the worship of Rama and Sita and admitted to discipleship men of all castes. He adopted Hindi as the language in which he explained his doctrines and thus achieved a great popularity with the masses and specially the lower classes. Of all the disciples of Rāmānand, Kabīr was the most famous.

Just as Rāmānand dwelt upon the worship of Rama, another great reformer Vallabhāchārya preached the cult of Krisṇa. He was a Telang Brahman of the Deccan and was born in 1479. A man of uncommon talents, he became profoundly learned in a short time. He asked his followers to offer everything in the service of Krisṇa. The formula of dedication which every disciple had to utter meant that everything was to be dedicated to Krisṇa. But those who came after Vallabh interpreted his doctrine in a material sense, and in their hands the creed of Vallabh lost its original purity and simplicity.

The great Vaisṇavite teacher Chaitanya of Nudia who preached the worship of Krisṇa was born in 1485 of Brahman parents. He renounced the world at the age of twenty-five and became a Sannyāsī. He laid stress on love, humanity and the abolition of caste distinctions. His heart was full of pity for the poor and the weak. He exhorted his disciples to teach unto all men down to the lowest *chāndāla* the lesson of devotion and love. To religious teachers his advice was:—

"Do not take too many disciples, do not abuse gods worshipped by other peoples and their

scriptures, do not read too many books and do not pose as a teacher continually criticising and elucidating light. Do not stay there where a Vaiṣṇava is abused. Do not listen to village tales. Do not by your speech or thought cause pain to a living thing. Listen to the recitation of God's name. Recollect his kindness, bow to him and worship him. Do what He wills as a servant, believe Him to be a friend and then dedicate yourself to Him."

Chaitanya's fame spread far and wide. Men from all parts of Bengal came to fall at his feet and to hear from his golden lips the message of love and *Bhakti*. There are millions of men who still utter his name with a feeling of reverence, devotion and love.

The influence of Islam is to be clearly seen in the teachings of Nāmadeva and Kabīr. Both laid stress on the unity of the Godhead, condemned caste and idolatry. Kabīr makes no distinction between the Hindu and the Turk for they are pots of the same clay and are striving by different roads to reach the same goal.

'Of what avail is the worship of stone and bathing in the Ganges, if the heart is not pure? Of what avail is a pilgrimage to Mecca, if the pilgrim marches to the Kaābā with a deceitful and impious heart. Men are saved by faith and not by works. None can understand the mind of God; put your trust in Him and let Him do what seemeth Him good. Kabīr reproached Brahmanas and Muslims alike for their barren disputes and asked them to give up their petty pride.'

Another great saint of this period was Nānak, the founder of the Sikh religion, who was born in 1469 at Tālwandī, a village on the Ravi in the Lahore district.

He was born of humble parents. His father Kālū performed the functions of the weighman and the patwari in his village. From his early boyhood Nānak was reserved, gloomy and contemplative; he never talked to his associates at school, and while other boys were engaged in their studies, Nānak spent his time in seclusion and meditation. When he grew up, his father, to



Guru Nanak.

wean him away from what he deemed a dangerous tendency to asceticism, gave him a little money for purposes of trade, which the pious lad distributed among hungry *faqirs*. At the age of sixteen the father married him in the hope that he would think more of the world and its pleasures, but nothing availed to deflect Nānak from this course. He travelled widely and conversed with men of diverse faiths, thus adding

vastly to his knowledge and experience, and finally renounced the world and settled on the Ravi where he built a house for himself. Here he died in 1539 at the age of seventy.

Nānak believed in the unity of God whom he invoked as the One, the Sole, the Timeless Being, the Creator, the Self-existent, the Incomprehensible, the Everlasting, the Fount of all life and energy. He forbade idolatry and condemned polytheism, and held that true religion is one. He asked the Mulla, the Pandit, the Darvesh, and the Sannyāsī to remember the Lord of Lords who has seen come and go numberless Muhammads, Viṣṇus and Śivas. He was extremely gentle and tolerant. He spoke of the Prophet and the *avatars* with equal respect. He declared himself to be a slave of God and laid claim to no supernatural power. The only weapon with which he hoped to combat error and ignorance was the word of God and the evident purity and simplicity of his doctrine. He laid stress upon right conduct and exhorted men to be truthful, honest, and God-fearing. It was not necessary to renounce the world, and in the eyes of God the pious hermit and the devout house-holder were both alike. As long as he lived he tried to minimise the differences between the Hindus and Muslims and left no rigid rules for his followers. It was after his death that owing to political reasons the Sikhs hardened into a sect and became a military community.

The doctrines of Nānak are embodied in the Ādigranth, the Holy Bible of the Sikhs which is to be distinguished from the second part composed by Guru Govind Singh who greatly modified the tenets of his predecessor. Some of Nānak's hymns are reproduced

below which show his ardent love of God and his faith in virtue:—

> He cannot be made, and He cannot be created;
> Essentially self-existent is the Pure One.
> Honour and glory is for them who serve Him;
> Sing, O Nānak! the praises of Him who is the repository of excellence.
> If we sing and hear His name and have love for Him in our hearts,
> Our sufferings shall be destroyed, and we shall take home with us happiness and peace.
> The voice of God is in what was heard; it is in the Vedas; His voice is all-pervading.
> God is called Ishvara; He is the destroyer and the progenitor and the sustainer of all.
> Even if I know Him, I could not describe Him, for He cannot be described;
> My Guru (spiritual guide) has grounded one thing into me;
> "The God is the one sole preserver of all beings, Him I should not forget."
> "Continence is my workshop, and patience my goldsmith;
> Intellect is my anvil, and the Vedas are my tools;
> Fear is my bellows, and the heat of austerity my fire;
> Love is my crucible, and the saving name of the Lord my whetting;
> In this mint of truth have I fashioned my prayer ful utterances;
> Those tc whom the Lord is gracious, to their lot falls such blessed work.
> Happy is Nānak by the merciful look of the beneficent."

The *Bhakti* cult did not stop with Nānak. In the sixteenth century it had as its exponents men of such nobility of character and purity of heart as Tulsīdās and Sūrdās whose writings are some of the priceless gems that our literature possesses. The work of these religious teachers has a great importance. They helped to promote unity between the two races. The Hindus began to worship Muslim saints and Muslims began to show respect for Hindu gods. This mutual goodwill is typefied in the cult of Satyapīr founded by Husainshah Sharqi which represents an attempt to unite the two religions. The attempt failed but the noble spirit that lay behind this aspiration did not die, and it was given to Akbar, the wisest and most tolerant of Muslim rulers, to plan on a large scale the synthesis of the diverse faiths and creeds that divided the peoples of India.

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